

## SC sacks singing judge who frequented karaoke bar



**By Philip C. Tubeza**  
HE did it his way. Now he's singing "Let me try again."  
The Supreme Court has sacked a Cebu City judge for demanding

SC SACKS/A4

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph



Thursday, September 23, 2004 ★★ 52 pages / 5 sections / vol. 19 / no. 288 P18

## Ombudsman blames 'typist's snafu,' includes agri chief

By Armand N. Nocum

NOT SO fast.

The Office of the Ombudsman has issued a separate order, this time including Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap's name in a list of respondents charged with graft for the alleged overprice scam involving P432 million

OMBUDSMAN/A6

# Palace probes 'fat cats'

## GSIS chief fights back vs congressmen

By Gil Cabacungan Jr., A. Noel Velasco and Jhunnex Napallacan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is reviewing the performance of the Government Service and Insurance System's Winston Garcia and other "fat cats" in government-owned and -controlled corporations, Malacañang announced yesterday.

Asked whether Ms Arroyo was considering replacing Garcia, GSIS president and general manager who is under fire for allegedly mismanaging the state pension fund and enriching himself in office, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said: "The performance of all [GOCC] executives including Mr. Garcia is being reviewed."

He hinted that Ms Arroyo could announce new recruits for plum GOCC positions in the coming weeks based on her performance assessment.

Bunye was also asked whether the Palace considered Garcia a "sacred cow" because of his family's contribution to Ms Arroyo's landslide win in Cebu, which clinched her victory in the May elections.

To which Bunye replied: "That [Garcia's being a sacred cow] is just an impression."

But Garcia, whom four congressmen and GSIS employees have accused of running up to P5.25 million in unliquidated cash advances, is fighting back.

He said one of the lawmakers seeking a congressional inquiry into the alleged mismanagement and misuse of funds by GSIS officials was lobbying in behalf of



**WINSTON Garcia** blames reinsurance companies who want to corner multibillion-peso reinsurance business.

JESS YUSON

reinsurance companies who wanted to corner the GSIS' multibillion-peso reinsurance business.

"I just hope it is a mere coincidence that one of the four congressmen who signed the resolution came to my office to discuss the reinsurance business of the GSIS," he said.

Garcia suggested that the criticisms against him were being funded by a "cabal" of reinsurance brokers who had been pressuring him to reverse his poli-

PALACE/A4

## Escort girl tells Senate 2 lawmakers are clients

By Michael Lim Ubac

NO NAMES, just clues for now.

The senator is "about 50 years old, an incumbent," would rather do it out of town, and deals with pimps. The congressman snorts shabu, gets tired after one round, knows gay speak, and also deals with pimps.

Thus an 18-year-old "escort" described two lawmakers whom she said were among the clients in her line of work.

Testifying yesterday before the Senate Committee on Labor Employment and Human Resources chaired by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, Janine Roque said she started working as an escort last year, when she was only 17.

Roque would not give names even when pressed during the hearing, prompting Estrada to require her to do so in an executive session with himself and two lady senators, his mother, Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, and Jamby Madrigal.

"Are you sure that the congressman uses drugs? You should name him," said Estrada. Roque claimed that the congressman had asked her and another fe-

ESCORT/A6



ESCORT girls' revelations rock august chamber. Teener tells Senate her list includes other congressmen, police generals and mayors.

JESS YUSON

## Child sex now prevalent in RP, cop tells senators

By Michael Lim Ubac

PEDOPHILIA, or the sexual desire of an adult for a child, is now prevalent among Filipinos, according to the deputy chief of the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

Testifying at a hearing called yesterday by the Senate committee on youth, women and family relations on the effect of the proliferation of pedophile materials on the increased sexual exploitation of minors, Sr. Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza

said pornography involving Filipino children was now readily available in the local market.

Mendoza said the problem was bigger than what law enforcers had thought. He said that in combating child pornography and interlocking crimes such as child prostitution and rape, the government needed to study the organized crime behind pedophilia.

He defined organized crime as perpetrated by at least three people with the

CHILD/A6



DESPITE pleas from wife and daughter, Iraqi militants execute American hostage Jack Hensley.

NEUTERS

## Militants behead another American hostage in Iraq

BAGHDAD—American hostage Jack Hensley was announced beheaded by Iraqi militants on Tuesday, just over a week before his 49th birthday, and apparently only 24 hours after compatriot Eugene Armstrong was similarly slaughtered—head sawn off by a black-clad, hooded man using a long knife.

The executioners announced Hensley's fate in an internet statement, in which they again vowed to kill one remaining captive, a Briton, unless all Iraqi

MILITANTS/A4

## Napocor key to solution of fiscal crisis—UP prof

By D.J. Yap, PDI Research and Michael Lim Ubac

SOLVING National Power Corp.'s woes will ease by a third the government's fiscal problems, according to a professor at the University of the Philippines School Economics (UPSE).

The hard part is convincing consumers that higher electric bills are part of the solution, said Felipe Medalla at a dinner with Inquirer editors on Tuesday.

Napocor, the state-run power-generating firm, is scrambling to stem huge losses projected at P114 billion this year after posting a total of P180 billion in losses over the past six years.

Its P1.3-trillion debt as of 2003 accounted for 42 percent of the national

government debt.

One way to finance Napocor's losses is to allow the firm to raise its tariff on distribution utilities, such as the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), that buy their power from Napocor, said Medalla, one of the 11 UPSE professors who warned of an economic collapse in two to three years unless the government reined in the public sector deficit and debt.

This means consumers will have to shoulder the burden through rate increases once the distribution utilities pass on the higher costs to their customers, Medalla said.

Napocor received early this month the go-signal from the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to increase its rates

NAPOCOR/A10

## Nuclear plant, IPPs, GMA behind Napocor mess

By Ronnel W. Domingo

STATE-OWNED National Power Corp. has been described as debt-ridden for so long that the term now needs to be defined in terms of numbers for us to realize the gravity of the situation.

Napocor management has not re-

leased data on its financial performance in 2003, although officials would only say that the firm incurred a net loss of P113 billion that year.

Its liabilities, which stood at P1.4 trillion as of end-2003, is still growing.

Two weeks ago, the national government completed raising \$1.5 billion from

the international debt market to cover Napocor's operational expenses and funding needs for this year.

This has been the case for several years now. But back in the mid-1990s, Napocor was issuing bonds as if it was a badge of its financial viability.

In 1996, then Napocor vice president

for finance Merlita M. Pajarillo wrote that the firm's leverage of 22 percent capital to 78 percent liabilities was "a strong indication of creditors' trust in Napocor's performance."

Napocor's financial woes are usually attributed to the graft-ridden Bataan

NUCLEAR PLANT/A10

### HORSE FIGHT



When animals attack, they cease being material for amusement. In Barangay San Antonio, Roseller T. Lim, Zarnboanga Sibugay, a bettor is run aground by a horse fleeing a battle with its own kind. Horse fight betting is a popular pastime among residents, especially among those who make a profit in trading rubber sap, their main livelihood.

EDWIN BACASMAN



## WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rain showers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

## Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: Inquirer news name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rain
Batangas	Partly Cloudy	General Santos	Cloudy with Rain
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo	Cloudy with Rain
Laos	Partly Cloudy	Manila	Cloudy with Rain
Clark	Partly Cloudy	San Jose	Cloudy with Rain
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Surabaya	Cloudy with Rain
Legaspi	Cloudy with Rain	Yogyakarta	Cloudy with Rain
Cebu	Cloudy with Rain		

# MILF hosting JI, says gov't report

**SEPARATIST guerrillas in Mindanao have hosted terror training camps for militant groups from Indonesia and Malaysia for at least seven years, according to a secret government report.**

The training continued until at least early this year, with 19 new members of the Jemaah Islamiyah—the al-Qaida-linked Southeast Asian terror group—finishing in January, said a copy of the Philippine National Police assessment report.

United States and Australian officials have expressed deep concerns over persistent reports of such camps in Mindanao, saying Jemaah Islamiyah could pass deadly skills to a new generation of militants capable of striking anywhere.

A number of suspected JI militants arrested in Southeast Asia have said they trained in the southern Philippines.

The covert training was reportedly hosted mostly by the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front which has rural strongholds across the impoverished south.

The MILF has repeatedly denied any links with Jemaah Islamiyah or other foreign terror groups, and—in an apparent effort to bolster its on-and-off peace talks with the government—has pledged to help track down terrorists.

## Terror training

The report said Jemaah Islamiyah's founder, the late Abdullah Sungkar, and MILF chairman Salamat Hashim, who died last year, agreed in 1995 to set up a training base inside the MILF's sprawling Camp Abubakar

stronghold in Maguindanao province. Terror training started in 1997 to 1998, the report said.

The Jemaah Islamiyah training base was set up near three other camps used separately to train new militants from neighboring Indonesia, it said. After Camp Abubakar fell during a July 2000 military offensive, Jemaah Islamiyah instructors and trainees fled and set up a new camp, Muskar Jabal Quba, on densely forested Mt. Kararao on the boundary of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur provinces, the report said.

It did not say how many Jemaah Islamiyah recruits have been trained in Mindanao, but said one "cadetship training" program produced three batches of graduates totaling 51 people, with the latest class of 19 finishing in January.

They included an Indonesian identified as Zulkifli, who later rose to head the group's Philippine cell.

The MILF has let other militant groups from Indonesia and Malaysia—including Laskar Jihad, Darul Islam and Kumpulan Militan Malaysia "and probably other Islamic terrorist organizations with separatist agenda in the rest of Southeast Asia"—train in their strongholds in the past, the report said.

It also said al-Qaida members have been at MILF camps, but didn't say when.

"Al-Qaida operatives have not only frequented its camps but in many occasions have stayed to conduct training on various terrorist skills for MILF fighters," it said.

The military has acknowledged that up to two dozen Jemaah Islamiyah members may still be in the south, but claims they're on the run and no longer training.

But other military officials said on condition of anonymity that training continues.

Authorities are still checking the whereabouts of the recently graduated JI recruits, whether they are still in the country waiting for assignments from their JI superiors or have already taken part in terrorist operations abroad, said Senior Supt. Leopoldo Batacil, the PNP spokesperson.

The PNP report said the 51 graduates belonged to three batches of Kuliyyah Harbiyah Daurah I, the cadetship training course for JI recruits.

The first two classes had 17 and 15 graduates, respectively, while the last one graduated 19 recruits last January, it said.

According to the police intelligence report, the country's south is included in the Daulah Islamiyah Nusantara, a pan-Islamic state that the Jemaah Islamiyah has been planning to establish in Southeast Asia.

## Spotted in MILF turf

According to the PNP report, foreigners were spotted in MILF-controlled territories in Mindanao during the late 1990s.

"Sometime in 1995, JI founder Abdullah Sungkar went to Hashim Salamat, the late MILF chairman and set up a training base at Camp Hudeibia located inside Camp Abubakar complex of the MILF in Sitio Tagaig, Barangay Bumburan, Barira Maguindanao in Central Mindanao," the report said.

Smaller camps were subsequently put up at Hudeibia.

The training activities began sometime between 1997 and 1998 in an "exclusive enclave inside the vast complex of Camp Abubakar," AP with Christian V. Esguerra

## Cigarette smuggling costs gov't P2B a year

By Carlito Pablo

THE GOVERNMENT is losing at least P2 billion in taxes every year from the large volume of cigarette importations at the Subic Bay Freeport and the Clark Special Economic Zone, according to Albay Rep. Joey Salceda.

Salceda (Lakas-Kampi) made this revelation as the House ways and means committee, which is holding deliberations on the proposed bill to index the tax rate on alcohol and tobacco, was swamped by opposing proposals on how taxes on domestically manufactured cigarettes can be raised.

"In excise tax alone, the government is losing P2.2 billion because of the huge volume of imported, high-end cigarettes that come in through Subic and Clark where these products are tax-free," Salceda said during a committee hearing.

Salceda told the committee that the value of imported, tax-free cigarettes that entered Subic and Clark in 2003 was P4.4 billion.

"If we add the foregone taxes like value-added tax, income tax and tax on raw materials, the amount of lost revenues would reach P2.7 billion," Salceda said.

## Abuses

Salceda and Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. (LDP; Makati) both proposed that cigarettes be removed from the list of tax-free products allowed to come in through the two economic zones.

"We have to address seriously the abuses of tax-free privileges in free ports and special economic zones," Locsin said.

In a press statement released hours after the committee hearing, Salceda corrected the figures he released earlier. He said the value of imported cigarettes that entered Subic and Clark from 2001 to 2003 was P4.6 billion a year and the estimated loss in taxes to the government amounted to P2.9 billion.

"If we include liquor, then the total loss to the government is around P10.2 billion during the three-year period under scrutiny," Salceda said in his statement.

Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus (NPC, Tarlac), the chair of the ways and means committee, said that if one were to include the other abuses of tax perks in Subic and Clark, the revenue losses would reach P7.4 billion a year.

Lapus said that these included losses from smuggling and counterfeiting.

The committee is hearing proposals on how to increase government receipts from the tax on cigarettes, currently valued at about P20 to 21 billion a year.

The two leading domestic cigarette-manufacturing companies—Fortune Tobacco Corp. and Philip Morris Philippines Manufacturing—have differing views on cigarette taxation.

Fortune Tobacco, owned by ethnic Chinese business tycoon Lucio Tan, supports a return to the ad valorem tax system from the current specific tax without any need to index tax rates to inflation.

The finance department is proposing the indexation of the excise tax on sin products to inflation, which is seen as one of the quickest way to raise revenues as the country deals with a threatened fiscal crisis.

But legislators, finance officials and cigarette and beverage manufacturers are locked in a debate on the virtues of the two forms of excise taxation—ad valorem or specific. (See related story.)

In a statement at yesterday's hearing, Fortune president Antonio Abaya claimed that the ad valorem tax was the most equitable way of raising revenues because "it has a built-in mechanism for capturing additional taxes whenever prices of excisable products go up."

Abaya said that had the finance department and Congress not adopted the specific tax system in 1997, government could have earned an additional P3.5 billion in cigarette taxes from the top five brands alone that were produced in 2003.

## 'Progressive tax'

He said that what the government wants to do now is to impose higher taxes that "hurt the poor more than the rich."

"Ad valorem is a progressive tax because high-priced products pay higher taxes while low-priced brands pay their proportionate share," Abaya claimed.

Philip Morris said it supported the views of some legislators about the weakness of the current four-tier price classification of cigarette brands.

Under the current specific system, the lower the price per pack of a cigarette brand, the lower the tax paid by the manufacturer.

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PERHAPS Malacañang has gone shy about announcing the appointments of its political allies or the official paperwork has yet to reach the President's spokesperson.

Why else couldn't Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye confirm the appointment of El Shaddai spokesperson Mel Robles as administrator of the Light Rail Transit Authority?

"We will confirm when we see an actual appointment," Bunye announced yesterday in a press briefing.

When told that Robles himself had confirmed his appointment, Bunye said: "That's what he says. We haven't seen anything yet."

But Robles, long-time spokesperson of El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde, had already re-

ported for work, reporters informed the presidential spokesperson.

"Anybody can go to the LRTA. Let's just wait for the actual appointment if there was such an appointment," Bunye said.

He gave the same answer when asked to confirm the appointment of former Sen. Ramon Revilla Sr. as chair of the Public Estates Authority. Revilla had taken his oath in Malacañang minutes after Bunye said he would double-check the appointment.

Unlike in the Cabinet revamp, when Bunye released names of new appointees to the media, Ms Arroyo's succeeding appointments of political supporters were not actually announced.

In Revilla's case, Palace reporters confirmed his appointment to the PEA on Monday when he took his oath in Malacañang. It

turned out he was appointed on Aug. 26.

Robles was appointed as early as Aug. 17.

Neither could Bunye confirm reports that actresses Nora Aunor and Elizabeth Oropesa were appointed or about to be appointed chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board and director of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., respectively.

He brushed off criticisms that most of Ms Arroyo's appointments were payback for political support in the May election.

"We have explained the minimum requirements. One, they need to have her (President's) trust and confidence and two, they must have the perceived ability to implement her programs. Those requirements have been met," Bunye said.

## Cops who can't shoot straight to lose guns

By Christian V. Esguerra

IF YOU want to keep your gun, better start shooting straight.

Metro Manila's 15,000 policemen got this warning yesterday as part of the Philippine National Police's latest effort to rid its ranks of that one embarrassment—cops who don't know how to shoot.

Judgment day will start on Saturday when the National Capital Region Police Office hosts a two-day firearms proficiency and classification march at its firing range at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig.

The competition will classify policemen based on their degree of proficiency. Marksmen are automatically disqualified.

Policemen who will fail to get past the preliminary round will be stripped of their firearms, said Director Avelino Razon Jr., NCRPO chief.

"These guns will be given to policemen who were not issued firearms by the government but who can shoot well," he said.

A total of 47 teams representing the five police districts in Metro Manila will participate. Each team will be composed of five members led by their respective commanders. There will also be two guest teams from the media.

## What is tax indexation?

THE NEED for indexation of the excise taxes on the so-called sin products—alcoholic beverages and tobacco—arose when taxes on these products were converted from ad valorem to specific taxes in the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program passed by Congress in 1997.

The main reason for the shift to specific taxation was that tens of billions of pesos in taxes were allegedly evaded by a certain cigarette company through the ad valorem system by under-declaring the value of its product.

Ad valorem taxes are computed as a percentage of the value or price of the product, like the 10 percent value-added tax or a five percent import tariff.

A specific tax assigns a fixed amount per unit of the taxed product, for instance, P5 per liter of gasoline or P20 per kilogram of copra.

The advantage of the ad valorem taxes is that they go up automatically when prices go

up, thus tax revenues remain steady even with inflation. Its disadvantage, however, is that manufacturers or traders can cheat by declaring the value of the taxed commodity to be lower than it actually is.

This form of cheating is prevented by the specific tax which imposes duty on the quantity of the taxed product sold by the company, whatever its price.

The problem is that the specific tax stays the same even as the price of the product keeps rising with inflation, thereby eroding the government's tax take.

To correct this, the tax can be indexed to inflation, that is made to adjust periodically and automatically based on actual inflation.

The Department of Finance had proposed indexation in 1997 when the shift to specific taxation was legislated. But members of Congress at the time struck out the indexation provision in the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program.

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# Oakwood mutineer escapes from Fort Bonifacio; guards probed

By Alcuin Papa

A MARINE officer in detention for participating in the Oakwood mutiny last year escaped last Tues-

day afternoon from his guards inside a military camp in Makati City. Navy spokesperson Capt. Geronimo Malabanan identified the escapee as 2Lt. Junniebert

Tubo. He was one of seven Marines detained inside the minimum security area inside the Marines' headquarters inside Fort Bonifacio. "He was being transferred be-

cause he was caught drinking. Unfortunately, his escorts failed to secure him properly," Malabanan said.

He also said that at the time of

the transfer of Tubo, it was raining hard. Malabanan theorized that Tubo might have taken advantage of the weather to escape. Malabanan added that newly-

designated Philippine Marine Commandant Maj. Gen. Orlando Buenaventura has already called for a thorough investigation of the incident.

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## Australia confident RP will allow Australian police

CANBERRA—Prime Minister John Howard said Wednesday he was confident that Malaysia and the Philippines will allow Australian police to operate in their territory as part of efforts to combat terrorism.

Earlier this week, Howard said if he wins elections on Oct. 9, his government will create six police teams devoted to fighting terrorism, sending some of them to Asian countries.

However, Malaysia and the Philippines warned such squads would not be welcome in their

countries and again denounced Howard's policy of launching pre-emptive strikes in other nations to prevent terror attacks.

Howard said Wednesday he would send Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and Justice Minister Chris Ellison to a number of Asian countries to seek support for his plan.

He told Australian Broadcasting Corp. television that given the history of Australian cooperation with Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, "I believe this propos-

al will be well received."

Asked about Malaysia's and the Philippines' stated refusal to play host to Australian police, Howard predicted the proposal will be supported by their police forces.

"We have to recognize it's one of those things that will be discussed at an agency level," Howard said. "And I am optimistic on the basis of past experience and the knowledge of the working relationship between the agencies that when the implications of it are understood, there will be a very positive view." AP

## Palace probes fat cats

From page A1

cies, particularly in the awarding of contracts for the insurance cover of the National Power Corp. (Napocor).

Iloilo Rep. Rolon Suplico announced on Tuesday that he had filed Resolution No. 726 calling for the congressional inquiry. The resolution was co-sponsored by Representatives Benasag Macarabon of Lanao del Sur, Eduardo Veloso of Leyte and Marcelino Libanan of Eastern Samar.

### \$50-M loan

Bunye told reporters that the President had also ordered a review of Garcia's proposal to grant a \$50-million loan to the Department of Foreign Affairs for the purchase of embassy buildings and housing facilities for ambassadors.

"This is something that will have to be reviewed," he said, adding that the GSIS was under the Department of Finance, which "definitely has a say" on its operations.

Bunye said Garcia was correct in stating that his annual salary of P359,000 did not come from the national government's budget but from a separate fund.

"But this is why we have to review the salary scale of GOCCs," he said.

The review is expected to open more GOCC positions for the President to fill up.

Bunye said Ms. Arroyo had ordered the review to also deter-

mine whether certain GOCCs could still be saved and be made profitable through re-engineering.

"But if there is really no solution, then they should either be privatized or collapsed. It's not fair that the public will shoulder their inefficiency," he said.

### Demolition job

Garcia told the INQUIRER in Cebu City that the criticisms being aired against him were "just a demolition job" and that the people behind the supposed campaign "might have a hidden agenda."

He denied that he had unliquidated cash advances, saying that the Commission on Audit certified on Tuesday that he did not have any such advances as of August.

He said the accusation was an old issue and expressed surprise that some people were singling him out when it was supposedly common knowledge that many GOCC heads had unliquidated cash advances.

"Why single me out? This might be because some of these congressmen are involved in the reinsurance business," he said.

Garcia said that before he took over the GSIS, it used to reinsure the Napocor premiums up to 90 percent. Last year, about 70 percent was retained by the state-run pension fund.

"Because of my policy of insuring more and reinsuring less, I was able to bring down the insur-



**SUPILCO:** Author of House Resolution No. 726 seeking to investigate the alleged P5.25 million in unliquidated cash advances incurred by Garcia.

ance cover of Napocor from \$25.2 million to just \$14 million, or savings for the Napocor of more than half a billion pesos," he said.

Garcia said he angered many people when he made this policy.

He suggested that those who had exposed his alleged unliquidated cash advances used a big amount of money to gain the support of the media.

### Attempted bribery

Garcia told the INQUIRER that a few months ago, one of the four congressmen who signed the resolution came to his office to discuss the GSIS reinsurance busi-

## GMA defends RP record in fighting terrorism

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo on Wednesday defended the Philippines' record in fighting terrorism following warnings from Australia and Britain of terror threats.

"We are steadily closing in on the terrorist threat and perhaps our allies should update their reports as we step up transnational cooperation through intelligence and information sharing," presidential spokesman Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

He did not specify the countries engaged in unfair "labelling" but the statement came just after the Australian prime minister warned of threats in the

region and after Britain updated its travel advisory, saying there was a "high threat of terrorism" in the Philippines.

The advisory issued by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office cited bombings in recent years as well as the threat posed by communist insurgents and Islamic militants like the Muslim separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Abu Sayyaf kidnapping group.

The Philippine government is engaged in peace talks with the MILF and, with US training, has captured or killed many leaders of the Abu Sayyaf, a group

linked by both Washington and Manila to the al-Qaida terror network.

But the government has suffered reverses such as the escape of Jemaah Islamiyah Indonesian bomb-maker Fathur Rohman Al-Ghozi from a Manila police jail in July 2003. The fugitive was killed in a gunfight in Mindanao in October.

Meanwhile, the military announced it captured another member of the Abu Sayyaf in Jolo on Tuesday.

The man, Kiri Kirab, had a P150,000 bounty on his head, the military said. AFP

### IN THE KNOW

● REINSURANCE enables the sharing of risk by insurance companies.

● Through this, a part or all of the insurer's risk is assumed by other companies in return for part of the premium paid by the insured.

● The insured, thus, gets coverage that would otherwise be too great for just one company to assume.

● By law, Napocor and all other government agencies must insure their fixed assets with the GSIS.

● For the year 2003-04, Napocor's insurance all-risk policy amounted to \$14.7 million, inclusive of taxes and commissions.

● GSIS retains 70 percent of the risks and reinsures the remaining 30 percent.

ness. The lawmaker was accompanied by five reinsurance brokers, he said.

During the meeting that took place at the GSIS conference room, he said, he explained GSIS policies on reinsurance to his visitors.

He recalled that the congressman was particularly interested in the reinsurance of Philippine airports at the time.

He alleged that the congressman offered him a bribe provided the GSIS retained only 10 percent of Napocor's insurance cover and reinsured 90 percent. He turned down the offer, he said.

The GSIS is mandated by law to provide insurance coverage to all government properties. Napocor is one of the biggest property holders in the government, with a single power plant costing up to \$750 million.

Garcia said the insurance pre-

miums of Napocor amounted to \$14 million in 2003. Of this, 70 percent is retained by the GSIS, and 30 percent, by reinsurance companies.

GSIS senior vice president Joji Valera told the INQUIRER that as of July, the total premiums received by the state agency had reached P2.8 billion, of which P1.5 billion was reinsured.

Those insured are covered by an industrial all-risk policy.

### Challenge

Nevertheless, Garcia said he was ready to face the congressional inquiry.

But he challenged Suplico to include other agency heads in the inquiry to dispel any suspicion that the latter had a hidden agenda.

Garcia also defended his sister and executive assistant, Carolyn Garcia Empemano, from the accusation that she was the second

most powerful official at the GSIS.

He said the employment of his sister was not illegal because he was allowed to employ someone close to him in a confidential position.

He added that his sister's post was coterminous with his, and denied that she had also incurred unliquidated cash advances.

### Mum Palace

The Confederation of Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage) said it was not surprised by the allegations on Garcia's alleged fund abuse but was appalled by Malacañang's continued silence on the issue.

Courage president Ferdinand Gaité noted that Ms. Arroyo had remained mum on Garcia's alleged "profligacy" in office even after calling for sacrifice from the public and austerity from civil servants.

"News about Garcia's wanton use of our funds is no longer a surprise to us, but Malacañang's silence in this obvious display of profligacy amidst its tough talk of sacrifice and belt-tightening is appalling," Gaité said in a statement.

He said government workers had repeatedly called for an investigation into Garcia's allegedly excessive salary and benefits as well as his reported abuse of the GSIS pension fund, but "these have fallen on deaf ears." With a report from Norman Bordonara

## Militants behead another American hostage in Iraq

From page A1

women in US and British prisons were released. The renewed threat came as a senior Iraqi justice official said the case of at least one of two Iraqi women in US detention was being reviewed, and that she may soon be released.

Posted Tuesday night under the pseudonym Abu Maysara al-Iraqi, the claim could not be verified. His past postings have proved correct, but a video of the killing by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's tawhid (monotheism) jihad (holy war) group, pledged to be released "soon," had not materialized yesterday.

"The nation's zealous sons slaughtered the second American hostage ... after the end of the deadline [for the hostage takers' demand]. We will provide you with film of the slaughter soon, God willing," said the

statement.

Al-Zarqawi is Washington's number one enemy in Iraq. The US Central Intelligence Agency believes "with a high degree of confidence" that he wielded the blade himself in Armstrong's decapitation.

Armstrong, Hensley and Briton Kenneth Bigley—construction contractors for General Supplies and Commercial Services, based in the United Arab Emirates—were kidnapped from their house in central Baghdad last week.

### Body found

Following the announcement of Hensley's killing, a US official said a body had been found, but had not yet been identified. Iraqi officials said a decapitated body was found in a black bag, in a western district of Baghdad. The head was reportedly found with the body, but there was no immediate indication that it was Hens-

ley.

"Obviously there needs to be a process of identification and the family needs to be contacted," the US official said.

On Monday, Armstrong's body was found near a Baghdad mosque hours before news of his beheading became public.

Hensley, from the state of Georgia, is married and has a 13-year-old daughter. His wife appealed on US television on Tuesday pleading that her husband be spared.

"My daughter would like her father back and I'm willing to do whatever it will take to get him here," Patricia Hensley said on the ABC network's "Good Morning America" program.

### Dr. Germ out soon

US forces insist they hold only two female Iraqi prisoners.

The women, dubbed "Dr. Germ" and "Mrs. Anthrax," are held in a prison for high-level sus-

pects.

Hours after the claim of the second beheading—the Iraqi Justice Ministry said the government and the US forces had decided to free Dr. Germ or Rihab Rashid Taha, a scientist so dubbed for her work on biological weapons. She was to be conditionally released on bail. Ministry spokesman Noori Abdul-Rahim Ibrahim denied the decision was linked to the kidnappers' demands.

Britain's Guardian newspaper quoted the justice minister as saying the case of Mrs. Anthrax, or Huda Amash, another scientist, was also being reviewed. The minister also said the review had nothing to do with the hostage situation.

Amash was on the US military's list of the 55 most-wanted members of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Sheik Abdul-Sattar Abdul-Jabbar, a member of the Association

of Muslim Scholars—conservative Iraqi clerics who oppose the US presence in Iraq but have interceded in the past to win the release of foreign hostages—has questioned the claim of only two female prisoners in US and British custody.

Abdul-Jabbar told al-Jazeera pan-Arab satellite television that there were "tens, perhaps hundreds of Iraqi women prisoners in the occupation's jail that were supposed to be released before this tragedy."

### No negotiations

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, US President George W. Bush and Iraq's interim prime minister, Iyad Allawi, have repeatedly said they will not negotiate with hostage-takers.

Even so, the British government made repeated appeals in the past week for the three hostages' release. On Tuesday, a Foreign Office spokesman ad-

ressed Arabic satellite channels across the region.

At the United Nations on Tuesday, Bush vowed not to retreat against an insurgency he said was likely to turn even more violent.

Before the report of Hensley's death, the family of British hostage Bigley, 62, urged Blair to have the two women prisoners freed. "Only you can save him now," Bigley's son Craig said in an appeal.

The family welcomed the release of Taha. Referring to the kidnappers, Bigley's brother Paul told British Broadcasting Corp. radio: "Hopefully they will pick this up on the media, and show that they have a gram of decency in them by releasing Ken."

Earlier, on Tuesday night, he was desperate. "I truly believe I've lost Ken," he told Channel 4 Television News. "He's not quite dead yet but I think they'll kill him," he said.

Reuters, AP

## SC sacks singing judge who frequented karaoke bar

From page A1

P250,000 and free visits to a karaoke bar from litigants in exchange for a favorable ruling.

In a 34-page resolution, the high court sacked Judge Agapito L. Hontanosas Jr. of Branch 16 Cebu Regional Trial Court for gross misconduct, gross ignorance of the law, and simple misconduct.

It also ordered him to explain in 10 days why he should not be disbarred for his serious offenses. The tribunal noted that Hontanosas had previously been sanctioned for frequenting casinos.

Judges (should) be the embodiment of competence, integrity and independence, and behave at all times to promote public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary," the court said.

It forfeited all of his benefits,

except his accrued leave credits, and disqualified him from public office.

The tribunal sacked Hontanosas based on the complaint of brothers Richard and Rafael King, owners of J. King and Sons Co. Inc. and who had a pending petition before the judge for "specific performance with damages with prayer for writ of preliminary attachment."

Hontanosas had granted the writ of attachment but on July 5, 2002, he withdrew it without conducting a hearing. That same day, he summoned the brothers to his house, and demanded P250,000 in exchange for "reconsidering the hearing."

"Due to the fact that Rafael and (Hontanosas) were friends, (the judge) frankly told Rafael that he needed money and if Rafael could match the offer of the opposing party and come up with P250,000, (Hon-

tanosas) would reverse his order lifting the attachment upon (the brothers') filing of a motion of reconsideration," the tribunal said.

The businessmen were not able to give in to the judge's demand because they were short of cash. When they filed their motion for reconsideration, Hontanosas junked it. He later inhibited himself from the case.

"Their conversation lasted no more than 20 minutes and because Richard and Rafael were shocked by (Hontanosas') action, they immediately left (his) house," the court said.

"By entertaining a litigant in his home and receiving benefits given by said litigant, (Hontanosas) miserably failed to live up to the standards of judicial conduct," it added.

The tribunal said it found that the allegation of extortion against Hontanosas was "suffi-

ciently substantiated" by the testimonies of the King brothers, which it found credible.

"Human experience tells us that extortion would be done in utmost secrecy, minimizing possible witnesses ... to require that there be any documentary evidence or a paper trail of the commission of extortion would be quite absurd for naturally, respondent would not allow such incriminating evidence to exist," it said.

The court also noted that the King brothers had three pending cases before Hontanosas but this did not stop the judge from frequenting their karaoke music lounge at the Metropolis Hotel.

Two waiters Antonio Cabigon and Axel Reyes, testified that the judge and his wife, sometimes accompanied by friends, frequented the bar. Management told the waiters that the judge and his

wife did not have to pay their bills.

However, for records purposes, Cabigon and Reyes would give the bill or order slips to Hontanosas for his signature, but it was the judge's wife who signed for them.

"(Hontanosas) should have insisted on paying, especially considering that the complainant has a total of three cases pending before his court. Nothing on record shows that (he) even exerted any effort to so insist. He appeared only too ready and willing to enjoy the facilities of complainant's karaoke for free," the tribunal said.

Hontanosas was also guilty of gross ignorance of the law for not holding a full-blown hearing on the motion to lift attachment and for violating the three-day notice rule. The motion was mailed to the Kings on July 3, 2002 but the judge approved it two days later

without holding a full-blown hearing.

"(He) acted with indecent haste in immediately holding a hearing on the motion ... filed only a few minutes before said hearing, in considering the same submitted for resolution, and in issuing the order lifting the writ for preliminary attachment and approving the counter-bond, all on the same day of July 5, 2002, without giving (the Kings) the opportunity to be heard on the matter," the court said.

It added that Hontanosas acted "negligently" when he approved the counter-bond for the lifting of the writ, considering that the bonding company did not have enough properties to answer for the counter-bond it issued in the amount of P35.9 million.

The tribunal said the bonding company's authorized maximum net retention was only P13.4 million.



# Erap told: What good is a Cabinet if president is bad?

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER President Joseph Estrada had no right to criticize President Macapagal-Arroyo's appointment of former Sen. Ramon Revilla Sr. as head of the Public Estates Authority (PEA) because he himself was not a good president.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles (Lakas, first dist., Davao City) made this bold com-

ment yesterday after Estrada mocked Ms Arroyo for putting Revilla in charge of an agency mired in scandal.

He said Estrada's comment that his Cabinet appointees when he was president were better than Ms Arroyo's choices was unfair and uncalled for.

"Conceding, but not agreeing that his appointees were good, Erap did not live up to their expectations so they

abandoned him in office. What's the use of a good Cabinet when you have a bad president?" Nograles said.

"What's good about an official Cabinet when the president does not listen to them and instead, forms his own midnight, gambling, drinking, non-official Cabinet?" he added.

Nograles said Ms Arroyo should be given a free hand in

choosing her Cabinet officials because more than anyone else, she knows what is best for her administration.

"She will govern much better than Estrada because of her work habits, focus, grasp and perspectives," he said.

On the other hand, Rep. Rozanno Rufino Biazon (Liberal Party, lone district, Muntinlupa) would have preferred a new face.

"Preferably someone young," he said, "This would have been a breath of fresh air and would reflect a proactive leadership. Sadly, the message delivered by the appointment is that we have a dearth of qualified and willing executives."

House Deputy Minority Leader Rolex Suplico (LDP, fifth dist., Iloilo) said it was unfortunate that the President could not find

more qualified people for government positions.

"The appointment of Revilla as PEA chair shows that not only can the administration resurrect a dead career, it can also resurrect an abolished agency," Suplico said.

The appointment could also be a reward for the 77-year-old Revilla who chaired the Senate Public works committee throughout his two terms.

## Tax amnesty to encourage cheats, says Escudero

By Cynthia D. Balana, Carlito Pablo and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

HOUSE Minority Leader Francis Escudero is calling for an outright rejection of the proposed tax amnesty law, which is now in the final stages of deliberations in the chamber, saying it would only encourage tax cheats and embolden tax evaders.

Escudero said it would be a disgrace to the 13th Congress if the measure is passed on top of the eight new tax measures that President Macapagal-Arroyo wants legislated to avert a fiscal crisis.

"It's a shame that this government commits to raise revenue by plugging tax leakages, estimated to be P200 billion every year, when the first bill it proposed on tax is to get criminals and cheats off the hook," he said.

The President last Monday signed as urgent House Bill No. 2933 which will grant a one-time tax amnesty on all unpaid taxes up to 2003.

Escudero said he was disgusted that the finance and internal revenue officials were supporting the measure which he said would compromise the government's resolve to curb the deficit.

Escudero also rejected the provision in the tax amnesty bill stating that a taxpayer can only be charged with perjury if he understates his net worth by over 30 percent.

"They are just giving a different definition of lying. Are they saying that it's acceptable that one cheats as long as it is below 30 percent?" he said.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño said the tax amnesty was an admission of the government's failure to go after errant taxpayers and a way of rewarding tax cheats by allowing them to settle their tax obligations at a giveaway rate of 3 percent of declared net worth.

He said the measure was "an insult to millions of wage and salary workers who have been religiously paying their obligations in the form of withholding taxes that are regularly deducted from their pay slips. It is they who should get a reprieve and rewarded, not the tax cheats."

Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus, who sponsored the bill on the floor on Tuesday night, defended the measure against the criticisms.

### 'Exceptional tool'

"Given the proper structure and timing, a tax amnesty can be an exceptional tool in revenue enhancement," he said.

Lapus said that aside from the immediate collection of revenues, another short-term benefit is the broadening of the tax base that will ensure "sustained improvement in collection revenue in the long term."

He said the tax amnesty would be the last chance for tax delinquents to come clean as it offers a "one-time amnesty on all national internal revenue tax liabilities for the taxable year 2003 and prior years."

He said HB 2933 will be "the ultimate tax amnesty," there would no forthcoming round of amnesties and tax enforcers henceforth would vigorously apply the full force of the law.

"We have declared a moratorium on the grant of tax amnesty, whether legislated or administratively undertaken by the Bureau of Internal Revenue," Lapus said.

The bill is the first of eight measures being sought by Malacañang from Congress in a bid to raise fresh revenues. It is intended to raise about P9 billion.

The House ways and means committee, which Lapus chairs, has also wrapped up deliberations on another measure which provides for the so-called lateral attrition of personnel in government agencies.

The bill will make it easier to fire under-performing government personnel, particularly in the revenue-generating agencies like the revenue and customs bureaus, as it will tie their tenure with performance. Poor performance may be penalized by dismissal from service.

Short of abolishing public agencies, the bill would institutionalize management objectives and accountability and establish performance-based standards in inefficient agencies, said Lapus.

Despite opposition from former President Ramos and business leaders, the President is not changing her mind about the tax amnesty measure, her spokesperson said yesterday.

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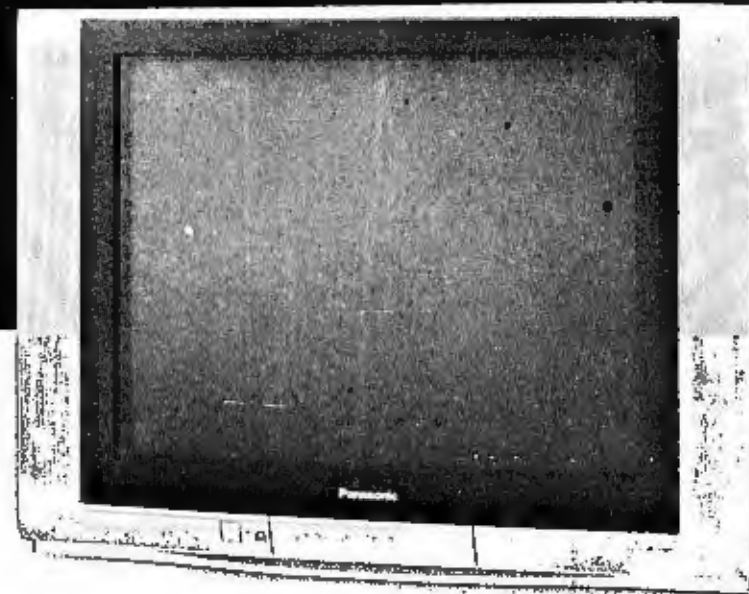
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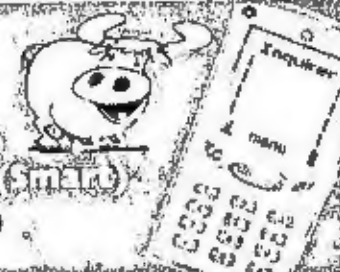
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## Ombudsman blames 'typist's snafu,' includes agri chief

From page A1

worth of fertilizer.

Assistant Ombudsman Pelagio Apostol yesterday blamed the snafu on a "typist."

"We are checking on the delay in the process," he said in a phone interview when asked to explain the lapse of more than a month in the issuance of the order on Yap and the other respondents.

"He (Yap) is part of the complaint as the principal signatory of the documents. There was no malicious intent on the part of the Ombudsman to drop his name from the list of respondents," Apostol said, adding that Yap's name could not be dropped prior to the filing or dismissal of the case.

In a text message, Yap said he welcomed the order as it would give him a chance to clear his name and that of his office.

But in a separate phone interview, complainant Marlene Esperat said there had been an attempt to clear Yap, a former student of President Macapagal-Arroyo's at the Ateneo de Manila University, of liability in the alleged scam.

"If I did not react strongly to his non-inclusion in the list of respondents, they could have gotten away with that kind of strategy to clear the President's fair-haired boy," said Esperat, a former action officer of the resident ombudsman at the Department of Agriculture.

Citing her "Ombudsman sources," she said "the strategy would have worked if the media did not learn about it."

Esperat was referring to two separate orders from the Office of the Ombudsman dated Aug. 17 wherein it told the respondents to submit counter-affidavits because the complaint was "sufficient in form and substance."

Those ordered to reply to the complaint were former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante; Undersecretaries Edmund Sana, Ibarra Poliquit and Belinda Gonzales; DA legal service head Eduardo Garcia and chief accountant Ophelia Agawin; Jesus Varela; Benjamin Tabios; and businessman Pepito Alvarez, majority owner of the Philippine Phosphate Fertilizer Corp. (Philphos).

Yap's name was missing from the two orders, which listed the names of the nine other respondents four times.

### Sept. 17 order

But three days after the issue hit the media, Assistant Ombudsman Apostol wrote the In-



YAP: Chance to clear his name

quirer saying "there is no truth to the report" that Yap's name had been dropped from Esperat's complaint.

"An order dated Sept. 17, 2004, requiring respondent Yap to file his counter-affidavit in answer to the charges hurled against him has been issued by this office," said Apostol, who heads the Preliminary Investigation and Administrative and Adjudication Bureau.

But not even Yap, whose office is near the Ombudsman's office in Quezon City, knew about the new order five days after it was supposedly released. Yesterday, the Inquirer ran his press release wherein he expressed confidence that the other respondents would be cleared as well.

The order including Yap's name also said that Esperat's complaint was "sufficient in form and substance" and that the case would now proceed to the preliminary investigation phase.

### Negotiated contract

In her complaint, Esperat said the respondents procured the fertilizer through a negotiated contract instead of a public bidding.

She said they had colluded to allow the government to buy P432 million worth of fertilizer from Philphos, a supposed "favored" supplier, for the rice-planting season of May-October 2003.

Esperat said the deal was also "tainted with overpricing, favoring a bidder and commissions."

She said the fertilizer was overpriced by about P100 per bag.

## Escort girl tells Senate 2 lawmakers are clients

From page A1

male escort to take shabu before having sex.

The young woman also said regular clients of "escort services" included other congressmen, police generals and mayors, but she could not provide details.

Asked how the Senate might handle the issue henceforth, Estrada, a first-time lawmaker said: "This is a sensitive issue. We will study it first."

None of the other sexy movie starlets present at the hearing—Keanna Reeves, Kriselda Kristel, Martha Daniels and Francine Prieto—made as stunning a revelation as Roque's.

Prieto, a fashion and commercial model who has made a few movies, told the committee that she was not engaged in escort services, but had served as an usher during functions of some big companies.

### To 'walk' or not

Estrada later told reporters that Roque eventually identified the congressman, but still refused to say for certain that she had sexual intercourse with him.

After the closed-door session, Roque was likewise persuaded by reporters to recount encounters with her clients.

She met the congressman "face to face" in March. She said he had picked her and another female escort from among several women presented to him.

They were brought to a condominium unit, Roque said. After the con-

gressman and the other escort had sex, he "got tired" and told Roque to just come back the following week.

"I did not come back," she said. "I came out of there crying." Not that she hadn't done it before, she said, citing two previous instances. But this time around, her pimp (she used the word "bugaw"), who was the other girl's aunt, had not told her that the congressman specified a "walk" or "wok," gay speak for sex.

### Fishing for evidence

Roque's experience with the senator was not nearly as intimate. At the time that she was being fixed up with him, she and a few others were already gathering evidence to back up fellow escort Keanna Reeves' exposé about lawmaker clients. The Lower House had also passed a resolution ordering an investigation.

Speaking in Filipino, she recounted the plan: "I was to approach and ask for his name, observe his reactions, just to get proof that some politicians do hire girls. We wanted to have evidence before we faced any probe; our lives were at stake." Next, she called a pimp who assured her a deal could be made with the senator.

But Roque said she changed her mind after a date (last month) was set. She said the pimp did not insist, since he had already arranged for two other escorts to go instead.

"The place agreed upon was in Quezon City, but the senator changed his mind, and opted to take the girls to the province," said Roque.

She clarified that she had nothing against lawmakers. "It's the pimps

that I'm angry at [because] they fool us, especially the new girls." The pimps got more than half of their earnings, she said.

Roque explained: a client pays P5,000 to P10,000 for "PR" or "chica," the term for entertainment without sex. Beyond that, he is charged up to P15,000. It goes without saying that a pimp gets a cut, but he or she can earn more by not declaring the total amount paid.

As for the drugs during jobs, Roque said the client provided it. "It depends on what is available." Some of her colleagues preferred the party pill "ecstasy," she said.

While she herself did not use drugs, she said, she would have done so, had she been compelled to have sex with the congressman. She did not elaborate.

### My show, remember!

Under intense questioning by Senator Luisa Ejercito, the 33-year-old Reeves, who started it all, admitted that she was a professional hooker. But she said she did it to earn a living, and that she was not forced into it.

"I am old enough, after all," she said, speaking in Filipino.

Reeves told Ejercito that she made from P5,000 to P15,000, depending on the client's requirements.

"Per shot?" the incredulous senator burst out also in Filipino, eliciting laughter.

Reeves, who gave her real name as "Janette Derecho," said she did not mean to make trouble for the lawmakers; she just wanted to straighten out her life.

## Child sex now rife in RP, senators told

From page A1

intent to gain profit.

"We're now crafting a national campaign plan to address this problem," Mendoza said, adding that a heightened crackdown on smut tabloids, sexually charged shows, and pirated CDs on pornography would be implemented to curb the rising incidence of child prostitution.

Law enforcement agencies as well as child welfare groups vowed to put up a united front to stop the sexual exploitation of children and pornography as a whole.

They include the PNP, National Bu-

reau of Investigation, Presidential Anti-Illegal Recruitment Task Force, Coalition Against Trafficking of Women, Philippine Alliance Against Pornography (PAP), Philippine Center for Missing and Exploited Children, End Child Prostitution and Trafficking, and Stop Trafficking of Filipinos.

### Patronage system

Asked by committee chair Sen. Jambay Madrigal whether politicians and powerful interests were behind the upsurge in child prostitution, Mendoza said: "We have not yet

[found] the relationship ... but we have reason to believe that the patronage system is there."

Madrigal, who is drafting a law making the possession of child pornography, such as CDs and magazines, a crime, showed Mendoza and other police officials present at the hearing a copy of the Sisid tabloid showing "young children in a lesbian act."

"This is really disgusting," said the senator. "If we can't catch the supply, we better catch the demand."

Mendoza said it was possible that a "crime ring" was involved in the

worsening problem.

He said PNP Director General Edgardo Aglipay had ordered him to ascertain whether there were politicians and men and women in the government service behind, or involved in, child prostitution.

He also said he was ordered to identify the source of narcotics used in child pornography after it was noted that some children were drugged prior to a movie shoot or pictorial.

### 'Japayukis'

Madrigal and such groups as the PAP also want the government and the private sector to restrain the nighttime TV shows from exploiting children.

"This is really a disgusting crime that should be acted upon," said Madrigal, who pointed out that in these shows, young children were being made to dress like "japayukis" (Filipino women working as entertainers in Japan).

"They should be shown the correct side of life," she said.

PAP secretary Tita Revrente expressed hope that "something will happen finally."

She said pornography was proliferating because the public was not doing its share.

"A lot of people complain ... about movies or television commercials, but don't write or call to any of the offending programs or producers," she said.

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# OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

HER EXCELLENCY GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO  
Malacanang Palace, Manila

Dear Madame President,

The Confederation of Sugar Producers Associations, Inc. (CONFED) is the biggest federation representing more than 50% of the total number of sugar farmers in the Philippines today. We have always supported your programs in government and applauded your move when you appointed James Ledesma as Administrator for SRA three years ago.

Three years ago, we were a regular importer of sugar to supplement the shortfall of our domestic supply because our production was not enough to cover the requirements of domestic consumption. Mr. Ledesma corrected this. When he assumed his office as Administrator of SRA, his programs focused on productivity and production efficiency and today, we are already exporting sugar to the world market.

When Mr. Ledesma started as Administrator, our production was 1.6 million mt of sugar annually; this year, under his able leadership, we have produced 2.34 million mt of sugar. This is quite a substantial accomplishment considering that the Master Plan of the Sugar Industry projected domestic self-sufficiency within a 10-year time frame.

It is unfortunate that, at this time when the industry is supposed to unite and work together for the common good, we are still beset by "crabs" who try to bring our good leaders down. You, Madame President, have experienced this and continue to experience attacks from politicians with vested interests who have nothing constructive to offer.


This is what Mr. Ledesma is presently experiencing and for this reason we are rallying to support him knowing that he has done a lot to bring the sugar industry to where it is now and he will continue to provide the leadership that will eventually make our industry competitive.

We support Mr. Ledesma not only because of his leadership capabilities and his exemplary qualifications but also because of his unquestionable integrity. We also support Mr. Ledesma because of his unqualified commitment to work for the welfare of the sugar industry.

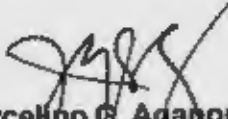
In this regard, Madame President, we hope that you will consider this position and retain the services of James Ledesma as Administrator of SRA. We cannot imagine any other person who would be as qualified, as capable, as committed and as honest to assume the leadership position in the sugar industry.

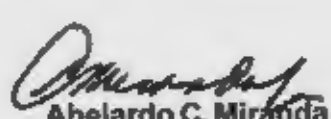
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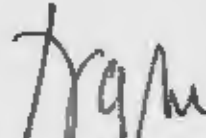
  
Reynaldo P. Bantug  
National President

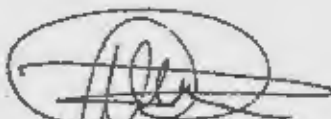
  
George R. Zubiri  
Chairman, Luzon Chapter


  
Jose Luis J. Tongoy  
Chairman, Negros Chapter

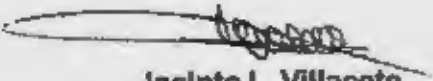
  
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Planters Assn., Inc.

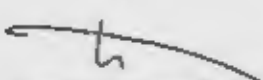
  
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Pasudeco Cooperative Mktg.  
Assn., Inc.


  
Lambert R. Aguilar  
Del Carmen Sugar Producers  
Coop. Mktg. Assn., Inc.

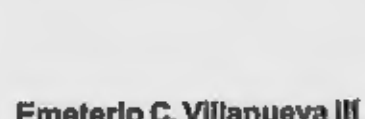
  
Dennis L. Afable  
Saprocom Multi-Purpose Coop.


  
Raul Delin L. Divinagracia  
Bicol Sugar Planters Cooperative  
Mktg. Assn., Inc.

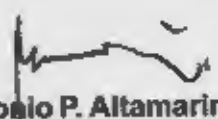
  
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Northern Phil. Planters Assn.

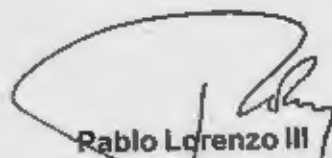
  
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Norphil Farmers Multi-Purpose  
Coop. Inc.

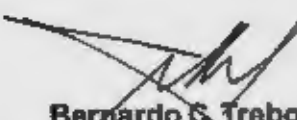
  
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Davao, Inc.

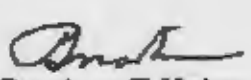
  
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Sugar Producers Association of  
Bukidnon

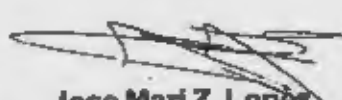
  
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Planters Assn., Inc.

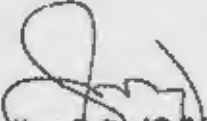
  
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Cooperative

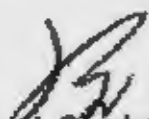
  
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Farmers, Inc.

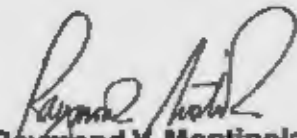
  
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First Farmers Assn., Inc.

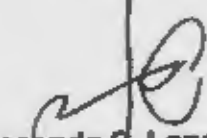
  
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Tolong Multi-Purpose Coop.

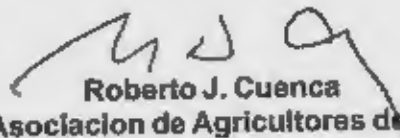
  
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Julian C. La'O IV  
Independent Sagay-Escalante  
Planters Inc.- MPC

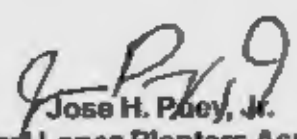
  
Romeo J. Gamboa, Jr.  
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Silay-Saravia, Inc.

  
Raymond Y. Montinola  
Associated Planters of Silay  
Saravia Cooperative

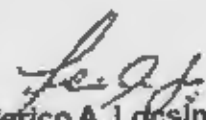
  
Rosendo G. Lopez  
First Farmers Association, Inc.


  
Roberto J. Cuenca  
Asociacion de Agricultores de la  
Carlota y Pontevedra, Inc.


  
Jose Ramon L. del Prado  
Negros Oriental Planters  
Assn., Inc.

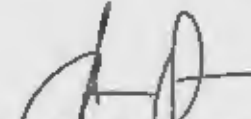
  
Jose H. Paey, Jr.  
Central Lopez Planters Assn. Inc.

  
Miguel S. Hinojales, Jr.  
Negros Sugar Farmers Assn., Inc.

  
Federico A. Loesin III  
Asociacion de Hacendados de  
Silay-Saravia, Inc.

  
Luciano T. Ilon  
Association of Negros Coop., Inc.

  
Anthony G. Hnado  
Prime Movers, Inc.

  
Jose Ma. B. Montinola  
Victorias-Manapla-Cadiz Farmers Assn., Inc.



# Chavit says he has settled all cash advances

By Armand N. Nocum

ILOCOS Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson Monday said he had settled all "cash advances" he had made during his previous term as governor of the province.

In a statement, Singson also scored the lawyers of ousted President Joseph Estrada for trying to destroy his credibility as the prosecution's star witness in Estrada's plunder trial.

"They can look into the records; they're there for everyone to see. I have settled all these cash advances. Making such advances, as everyone knows, is not illegal—it becomes so only if these are not settled during a given time," Singson said.

Singson was reacting to the testimony of defense witness Agaton Decayanan, former provincial auditor of Ilocos Sur, who testified that Singson had "unsettled cash advances" totaling P2,900,000 as of Dec. 31, 1995.

In an interview during a break in the trial, Estrada lead counsel Rene Saguisag said Singson had amassed P800 million more in unliquidated cash advances from 1995 to 1999.

He said Singson decided to tell all on Estrada, his former friend, to escape the unrelenting pressure being exerted on him by COA auditor Agustin Chan relative to his unliquidated cash advances. Chan was killed in an ambush in 2001.

"Estrada's lawyers are merely repeating all the lies they had previously raised in a vain attempt to destroy my credibility. They think that by [repeating] those lies, they can get the people to believe what they are saying is true," Singson said.

On the contrary, he said, it was "my credibility as a prosecution witness during the Estrada impeachment trial that helped bring down his corrupt regime. No amount of repeated lies can alter that."

Singson accused Estrada's lawyers of de-

laying his trial so the people would lose interest in it and "eventually forgive and forget."

"His lawyers are sadly mistaken; the patience of the people is wearing thin and further delays can make it snap," Singson said.

Yesterday, the trial resumed with defense lawyers continuing to assail the credibility of Singson to show that he blew the whistle on Estrada because he was already "cornered" by the COA on his unsettled cash advances of P29 million.



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## Media relations seminar for PSG

By Juliet L. Javelana

THE CHIEF of the Presidential Security Group yesterday said he would require all his men to undergo a seminar on "media relations" after an Inquirer reporter filed a complaint of harassment against some members of the elite group providing security to the President and Malacañang Palace.

Col. Delfin Bangit, PSG commander, made the assurance in a letter to Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., a senior Inquirer reporter assigned to Malacañang, who complained that he was held for one hour and barred from entering the Palace last Sunday.

After being held for one hour over an argument with some PSG guards on the conduct of their security check, Cabacungan was allowed to walk through Gate 6 toward the press working area in Kalayaan Hall only to be called back "in a condescending manner" because he was not in the Palace-prescribed dress code.

Bangit said his investigation showed that Cabacungan "got angry with my men as they did their job."

Still, he said he has "summoned the personalities involved and heard their sides and exhorted them to do their jobs with professionalism."

Bangit said remedial measures would be made to a repetition of the incident.

He said the commander of the Presidential Guards would meet with the Malacañang Press Corps, composed of the around 60 print, radio and television reporters covering Malacañang, to explain security procedures.

"We will require our personnel to undergo media relations and media handling seminars," Bangit said. He also designated Lt. Enrico Rivera, head of the PSG Media Liaison Office, to ensure that the PSG would have an "interoperation" with the media.

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### NEW SCHEDULE OF DIVIDEND DECLARATION, DIVIDEND PAYOUT AND CCA (Formerly CCS Account) PLACEMENT PERIOD

To comply with the directive of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas dated June 9, 2004, to pay dividends on actual income earned as of date of declaration, the AFP Savings and Loan Association, Inc. (AFPSLAI) will adopt the quarterly computation of dividend and the quarterly payout effective third quarter of year 2004. The CCA (formerly CCS account) placement periods have been changed effective fourth quarter 2004.

AFPSLAI has approved a new schedule for the dividend declaration and dividend payout. The new schedule will be more beneficial to members because of earlier schedule of dividend payout. The new schedule is as follows:

PLACEMENT PERIOD	APPLICABLE QUARTER	Dividend Declaration	NEW DIVIDEND PAYOUT	DIVIDEND PAYOUT as previously announced AUGUST 15, 2004
June 1-15, 2004	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2004 (June 17-September 14)	October 15, 2004	October 25 <sup>th</sup> onward	November 15, 2004
1 <sup>st</sup> three working days of October 2004	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 2004 (October-December)	January 15, 2005	January 25 <sup>th</sup> onward	February 15, 2005
2005 ONWARD				
1 <sup>st</sup> three working days of January	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter (January-March)	April 15	25 <sup>th</sup> April onward	May 15
1 <sup>st</sup> three working days of April	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter (April-June)	July 15	25 <sup>th</sup> July onward	August 15
1 <sup>st</sup> three working days of July	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter (July-September)	October 15	25 <sup>th</sup> October onward	November 15
1 <sup>st</sup> three working days of October	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter (October-December)	January 15	25 <sup>th</sup> January onward	February 15

\*This notice revokes all other previously made announcements/commitments.

AFPSLAI MANAGEMENT

For further details, call 9116576 or 9112033 loc. 1388/2309; or visit AFPSLAI's website: [www.afpslai.com.ph](http://www.afpslai.com.ph); or e-mail address at [info@afpslai.com.ph](mailto:info@afpslai.com.ph)

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# Napocor key to solution of fiscal crisis—UP prof

From page A1

by an average of 98 centavos per kilowatt hour (kWh), just half of the P1.87 per kWh that Napocor petitioned for in June.

Felipe said he was surprised that the public had not raised much ruckus over the power rate increases.

"Just wait until they see the electric bills in the next few months," he said.

The new rate takes effect on Sept. 26 and the distribution utilities, particularly Meralco, will likely pass on the new rates to their customers by Nov. 1. But consumers will likely feel the effect of the rate increases only in January after Meralco and other power distribution firms have gone through the process of requesting rate adjustments, according to the ERC.

The government should explain the necessity of the higher power rates to the public, said Medalla, a former economic planning secretary.

"This is where leadership comes in. You can't convince people to pay higher electricity bills or pay more taxes if they see your yoyos with you on a trip to China," he said, referring to the big contingent that accompanied President Macapagal-Arroyo on a recent trip.

## Need for symbols

"We need symbols. In the long run, these symbols may not make much of a difference but the public has to see that government is also doing its part to alleviate our

fiscal troubles," Medalla said.

He cited the pork barrel as an example. "Abolishing the pork barrel will not make a huge impact on our debts, but its impact on the public will be significant."

Medalla said he had sensed the sorry fiscal state of the country as early as February, but no one had anticipated that the Napocor problem would reach gargantuan proportions.

"Last year, I expected Napocor to be a P20 billion to P30 billion-a-year problem. I never expected it would become a P100 billion-a-year problem," he said.

He explained that Napocor's woes began when Ms. Arroyo imposed a cap on Napocor's power purchase adjustment rates in 2002, which greatly reduced Napocor's revenues.

## Shape up

Medalla said he was willing to bet P200 of the audience's P100 that there would be no economic crisis in two to three years.

"After all is said and done, government and Congress will see that the only way to avert the crisis is to shape up."

But Medalla then made a quick turnaround, saying "of course, many things can still go wrong."

"Even if the national government assumes P500 billion of Napocor's debt, the state-run utility firm is still bent on seeking a rate increase next year."

In a document submitted to the Senate ways and means committee, Napocor enumerated its rate adjust-

## IN THE KNOW

THE INEFFICIENCY of government corporations has contributed more than a third (37 percent) to the build-up of the total public debt, according to a recent study by professors of the UP School of Economics.

Last year, 30 government corporations posted a combined loss of P140.2 billion. The biggest loss was incurred by the National Power Corporation, whose P113.2-billion net loss was about five times the combined loss of all the other losing corporations.

Top Losing Government Corporations, FY 2003\* (in million P)

	Net Loss**
1. National Power Corp.	P 113,232
2. National Food Authority	7,585
3. National Electrification Administration	6,423
4. Light Rail Transit Authority	3,838
5. Philippine National Oil Co.	2,947
6. National Home Mortgage Finance Corp.	2,302
7. Technology Livelihood & Research Center	490
8. National Irrigation Administration	435
9. Bases Conversion Development Authority	413
10. Philippine Rice Research Institute	394
11. National Tobacco Administration	282
12. National Development Co.	282
13. Philippine Coconut Authority	208
14. Philippine Children's Medical Center	208
15. Cultural Center of the Philippines	202
16. National Kidney and Transplant Institute	164
17. Philippine Heart Center	144
18. Lung Center of the Philippines	135
19. Center for Int'l Trade Expositions & Missions	87
20. Sugar Regulatory Administration	74
21. Philippine Convention & Visitors Corp.	70
22. National Daily Authority	59
23. People's Television Network Inc.	52
24. Zamboanga City Special Econ. Zone Authority	47
25. Cagayan Economic Zone Authority	33
26. Phil. Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care	32
27. Philippine Institute for Development Studies	31
28. Cottage Industry Technology Center	15
29. Development Academy of the Philippines	9
30. Philippine Coop Insurance Corp.	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>P 140,211</b>

\*Includes only 48 of 76 GOCCs

\*\*Before taxes

Source: Department of Budget and Management's Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing Fiscal Year 2005 (Tables)

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ments needed to wipe out its net loss.

Napocor said the provisional authority to raise its generation rates by an average of 98 centavos per kWh issued by the ERC on Sept. 3 would result in an increase of P1.2318 per kWh for Luzon, P0.2202 per kWh for the Visayas and P0.2665 per kWh for Mindanao.

Napocor said the rate adjustment would allow it to improve its financial condition, speed up privatization efforts and "attract new capacity" from the private sector.

But committee chair Sen. Ralph Recto said the public was told that after the 98-centavo per kWh increase in Napocor rates early this month, only a 98-centavo increase loomed on the horizon.

"Wrong. The subsequent increase would be much higher," Recto said in a statement.

## Three scenarios

He then painted three scenarios envisioned by Napocor to ensure that its operations and financial condition would be viable despite its debts.

He clarified that the schedule of proposed tariff adjustments contained no provision for principal amortization, only interest expense, and no capital build-up for needed expansion of capacity to avert a power crisis in 2007.

First, should the national government absorb P500 billion of the Napocor debt (P598.56 billion), the corporation would still seek a P7325 per kWh rate increase as early as January next year, according to Recto.

If approved, this would bring the effective rate to P4.2001 per kWh or a 68.77-percent increase from the pre-September rate of P2.4886 per kWh.

Recto said that despite the 2004 and 2005 increases, Napocor would still seek an additional increase of P3673 per kWh in 2006, bringing to P4.5674 the per kWh cost that year under this scenario.

Second, if the national government does not absorb Napocor's debt, the firm would apply for P1.3075 per kWh increase as early as January next year.

If approved, this would bring the effective rate to P4.7761 per kWh or a 91.92-percent increase from the pre-September rate of P2.4886 per kWh.

Despite the 2004 and 2005 increases, Napocor will still seek an additional increase of P3173 per kWh in 2006, bringing to P5.0934 the per kWh cost that year under this scenario.

Third, Recto said that should the national government absorb only P200 billion of Napocor debt, the firm would still seek a P1.0775 per kWh rate increase as early as January next year.

If approved, this would bring the effective rate to P4.5461 per kWh or an 82.68-percent increase from the pre-September rate of P2.4886 per kWh.

Despite the 2004 and 2005 increases, Napocor will seek an additional increase of P3373 per kWh in 2006, bringing to P4.8834 the per kWh cost that year under this scenario.

# Nuclear plant, IPPs, GMA behind Napocor mess

From page A1

Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) project, for which the national government still pays \$155,000 a day.

The late Conrado D. del Rosario, Napocor president in 1985-1986, recalled that the BNPP's original cost of \$600 million was considered "on the high side" when the contract for supply and equipment was signed with United States-based Westinghouse Electric in 1976.

Del Rosario said added costs of transmission lines, fuel (uranium), site preparations, insurance as well as interest on loans—at 11 percent to 12 percent a year—pushed the total price to \$2.1 billion.

He said that when the Aquino administration decided against operating the plant, it also agreed to a Napocor request that it assume the BNPP assets and liabilities.

In a paper outlining Napocor's financial history, Pajarillo said the company's debts started to mount amid the economic crisis in 1983.

At the start of that year, and even before Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. was assassinated, Napocor was already facing problems in financing its projects.

This was due to the peso depreciation the previous two years and the reduction in fresh equity infusion from the government as part of the economic stabilization program then.

In the same year, the government's policy of debt moratorium resulted in the rescinding of four Napocor foreign loan commitments totaling \$91 million and cancellation of undrawn balance on three loans totaling \$14 million. Foreign banks also suspended Napocor's nine unused loans totaling \$49 million.

Pajarillo said these precipitated the power crisis in the early 1990s because projects meant to add generation capacity could not be implemented.

## Power outages

In 1990 and 1991, Napocor got a taste of what was to come due to massive power outages nationwide—it suffered a net loss of P65 million and P2.93 billion, respectively.

(The only previous years that Napocor incurred losses were in 1970 at P4 million and in 1971 at P1 million due to a peso devaluation.)

Efforts to solve the power crisis during the Ramos administration seemed to have stemmed the tide. In 1992, Napocor obtained 18 medium- and long-term financing plus three bridge loans.



BATAAN Nuclear Power Plant: The national government still pays \$155,000 a day in interest alone.

Partnerships with private firms were also started through build-operate-transfer (BOT), build-operate-own (BOO), rehabilitate-operate-maintain (ROM), and rehabilitate-operate-lease schemes.

In 1992, Napocor rebounded with a net income of P4.1 billion.

In 1993, the state-firm tapped the world capital market for the first time. It issued a Eurobond worth \$200 million. The next year, it floated a World Bank-backed Eurobond worth \$100 million.

## Biggest net income

Napocor posted its biggest net income in 1994 at P7.46 billion. That year, its power generation reached 30,620 gigawatt-hours.

Of the total electricity produced in 1994, 13.6 percent came from ROM and ROL plants and P15.3 percent from BOT and BOO plants. Thus, about 30 percent of Napocor electricity came from plants operated by independent power producers.

In 1995, Napocor made the rounds on the world financial market, obtaining a \$100-million syndicated loan from JP Morgan.

Within the same year, Napocor launched \$500 million in bonds. Then there was the pioneering 12-billion-yen bond obtained through the Asian Development Bank and underwriter Nomura

International.

Pajarillo said that at that time, everything seemed to point to continuing growth for Napocor. Then the Asian financial crisis hit in 1997.

The following year, Napocor posted a net loss of P3.4 billion, which grew year after year until it reached P113 billion in 2003 alone.

## Epira

In 2001, the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) was passed. It was touted as the answer to Napocor's woes.

Ironically, the years following the law's enactment saw measures which were supposedly meant to make power more affordable. But these just added more and more to Napocor's burden.

In 2001, Napocor reduced its rates by 30 centavos per kilowatt-hour as provided under Epira.

A year later, Malacañang ordered Napocor to peg its purchased power cost adjustment charges—the cost of electricity bought from independent power producers—to 40 centavos per kWh. The reduction cost Napocor tens of billions of pesos in losses.

Napocor continued to bleed. On Sept. 4, the Energy Regulatory Commission granted it the provisional authority to raise rates by an average of 98 cen-

However, Napocor officials said the increase still did not reflect the true cost of electricity. The firm is asking for an increase of P1.87 per kWh.

Asked why electricity cost so much, Raphael Lotilla, president of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm), said: "For one, the Philippines is an archipelago. This inherent limitation makes it expensive to develop power infrastructure and provide services."

## Overcapacity in Luzon

Energy does not come cheap, he said. "Fuel costs, whether it is petroleum, natural gas, geothermal or hydro. Even renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and biomass are costly. These are still not widely used because the technology involved cost so much," Lotilla said.

Finally, Lotilla said the current generation overcapacity in Luzon resulted in power plants not running at efficient levels.

Projections from Napocor and Psalm show that Napocor would suffer an average of P103.6 billion in losses a year over the next four years.

As far as things are going, it looks as though the companies

are looking at consumers' pockets for the solution.

## Cause of losses

Operating losses will also continue unless Napocor was allowed "reasonable recovery of its actual costs," officials said.

• Bataan nuclear plant: the original 1976 price of \$600 million was considered "on the high side." Added expenses further bloated the cost to \$2.1 billion. The government decided to mothball it but assumed the debts.

• National debt moratorium in 1983 wrote off \$91 million in loan commitments and cancelled or suspended unused loans totaling \$63 million.

• Power crisis resulted in net losses in 1990-1991.

• Partnerships with independent power producers (IPPs) started in 1990. According to the Institute of Popular Democracy, Napocor has lease obligation to IPPs totaling \$11 billion.

• Asian financial crisis in 1997 started Napocor's streak of net losses of P3.4 billion in 1998.

• The government invited the Lopez Group to contract IPPs to ensure that the \$4.6-billion Malampaya natural gas-to-power project would materialize. As a result, Napocor is now selling about half the electricity demand of Manila Electric Co., its biggest customer whose market makes up about 70 percent of the country's total demand.

• The power reform law of 2001 provided a mandatory power rate reduction of 30 centavos per kWh. Napocor data show that this resulted in P1.71 billion in lost revenue in the first seven months of 2002 alone.

• Labor Day 2002, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced that Napocor's purchased power cost adjustment—the cost of power it buys from IPPs would be frozen at 40 centavos per kWh—a reduction of 85 centavos per kWh. Napocor data show that this resulted in P4.5 billion in revenue losses in the first seven months of 2002 alone.

• In 2002, Napocor posted its first net operating loss.

• In its latest reorganization in 2003, Napocor covered P12 billion in separation benefits with fund from loans.

• September 2004, Napocor was granted a provisional authority to raise generation rates by an average of 98 centavos per kWh. Napocor is asking for a hike of P1.87 per kWh, which did not consider power costs from the new power plants 1,200-MW Ilijan, 140-MW Casernan, 70-MW Bakun and 345-MW San Roque.

## NAPOCOR FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (IN BILLION PESOS)

	Assets	Liabilities	Net Income/Loss	Net Operating Income/Loss
1985	P107.6	P77.5	1.10	3.9
1986	125.8	90.9	0.72	4.3
1987	139.9	102.5	0.98	4.7
1988	133.7	99.8	1.87	5.6
1989	137.0	101.4	1.66	5.3
1990	160.5	127.5	-0.07	4.1
1991	170.8	133.5	-2.93	2.6
1992	203.2	135.4	4.12	7.1
1993	245.4	173.2	1.37	8.7
1994	289.2	185.0	7.46	12.1
1995	351.1	245.1	3.91	11.5
1996	457.7	358.7	5.54	13.3
1997	619.1	441.8	3.05	11.8
1998	846.1	445.0	-3.62	6.9
1999	862.4	645.0	-6.95	8.5
2000	989.6	777.8	-12.97	5.4
2001	1006.0	795.2	-10.39	6.8
2002	1153.0	971.4	-33.70	-2.4
2003			-113.23	-19.2
2004*			-114.6	-44.5
2005*			-85.92	-45.5
2006*			-102.28	-49.0
2007*			-111.78	-50.4

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3. Napocor 60 years (Vol. 1): 60 Megawatts of Achievement. Edited by Corazon E. Espinoza, 1996
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# The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

## Bush demands UN help to fix Iraq

**UNITED NATIONS**—US President George W. Bush demanded Tuesday that the United Nations do more to help end the deadly chaos clouding Iraq's future, as he defiantly defended the US-led war to oust Saddam Hussein.

Days after UN Secretary General Kofi Annan declared the March 2003 invasion "illegal" under the world body's charter, Bush unapologetically told skeptical leaders here they must do more to help Iraq's fledgling interim government.

"The government of Prime Minister (Iyad) Allawi has earned the support of every nation that believes in self-determination and desires peace," said Bush, who was to host the Iraqi leader at the White House on Thursday.

Later, Bush and Allawi denounced the beheading of US hostage Eugene Armstrong by extremists in Iraq while warning that violence was expected to escalate before elections scheduled for January 2005.

But the president dismissed a gloomy US intelligence forecast for Iraq by saying the agency was "just guessing" when it warned of a possible civil war or—in the best scenario—tenuous political, economic and security stability.

"The CIA laid out several scenarios. It said that life could be lousy, life could be OK, life could be better. And they were just guessing as to what the conditions might be like," he said.

With just six weeks to the Nov. 2 election, Bush took aim at Democratic White House hopeful John Kerry, who has accused him of "colossal failures of judgment" that have wrought a "crisis of historic proportions" in Iraq.

"My opponent has taken to many different positions on Iraq that his statements are hardly credible at all," said the president, who frequently charged that Kerry is fickle on crucial national security issues.

In his speech, Bush urged UN members to heed two recent Security Council resolutions, including one in June 2004 that endorsed the interim Iraqi government and a multinational force to keep order.

"The UN and its member nations must respond to Prime Minister Allawi's request and do more to help build an Iraq that is secure, democratic, federal and free," said Bush, whose address drew applause only when it ended.

Bush said democracy in Iraq would spread across the Middle East and, in a rare rebuke, urged staunch US ally Israel to freeze settlements in the West Bank and Gaza and to end the "daily humiliation" of Palestinians. **AFP**

### Baghdad car bomb kills 11

**BAGHDAD**—A car bomb exploded outside a restaurant in a busy commercial area of Baghdad on Wednesday, killing at least 11 people and wounding 40, police and hospital officials said.

The blast destroyed several stores and sent thick black smoke spiraling into the sky. Shards of glass and debris littered the street in western Baghdad.

US soldiers riding armored vehicles cordoned off the area and firefighters doused water on burning cars. At least 10 cars were destroyed, one of them flipped upside down.

"I was just standing here talking and then I heard two huge explosions," said Humam Abdul-Hadi, who owns an electrical goods store near the bomb site. He said an ice cream restaurant had taken the brunt of the blast.

"I don't even know who they were targeting," said Abdul-Hadi, who had shrapnel wounds to the face and neck and blood spattered on his T-shirt. "They just bombed people eating ice cream."

At nearby Yarmuk hospital, morgue officials showed Reuters correspondent Mariam Karouny 11 corpses brought from the blast site. **Reuters**

### Cambodia hit by bird flu anew

**VEAL SBOV, Cambodia**—A deadly bird flu virus, which has killed 29 Asians this year, has reappeared in Cambodia and the government is deeply worried because villagers ate birds that had died of it, officials said on Wednesday.

People in this village just outside the capital Phnom Penh, including the owner of a farm where 5,000 chickens died in two days, said they took dead birds, cooked and ate them.

Experts say eating chicken that died of the bird flu is safe, provided it is cooked to an internal temperature of at least 70 degrees Celsius.

All those who have died of the H5N1 virus, which has also re-emerged in Thailand, Vietnam and China in recent weeks as well as striking in Malaysia for the first time, were infected by the virus from handling birds that had died of it. **Reuters**

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# Laws protecting civilians 'shamelessly disregarded'—Annan

UNITED NATIONS—With terrorism on the rise and hate propaganda targeting Jews and Muslims, Secretary General Kofi Annan opened the UN General Assembly by warning world leaders that basic laws to protect civilians are being "shamelessly disregarded" around the world from Iraq and Sudan to Russia and Uganda.

In a somber speech Tuesday before presidents, prime ministers and ministers from 191 nations, Annan said the prevalence of massacres, hostage-taking, attacks against innocent children and cold-blooded murders puts "all of us to shame" and reflects "our collective failure to uphold the rule of law."

To restore respect for basic laws that protect the poor and keep the strong from oppressing the weak, "we must start from the principle that no one is above the law, and no one should be denied its protection," Annan said.

"Every nation that proclaims the rule of law at home must respect it abroad, and every nation that insists on it abroad must enforce it at home."

At this year's General Assembly ministerial meeting, world leaders are confronting a depressing global agenda dominated by new terrorist threats, a humanitarian disaster in Sudan, turmoil in Iraq, and a growing gap between the richest and poorest inhabitants of planet Earth.

Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai said Afghanistan still has many hurdles to overcome, including combating poverty, illiteracy and terrorism but he called the country's first post-Taliban elections on Oct. 9 "the most significant milestone in our journey" toward democratic government.

But he warned that "As long as terrorism continues to exist in our region, neither Afghanistan, nor

our neighbors, nor, indeed, the rest of the world, can be safe."

Several leaders praised Annan's call for the rule of law, and Bush's focus on promoting democracy and combating terrorism.

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who spoke just before Bush, warned again that there would be no peace in the world until a more just economic and democratic world order is established.

"Peace will, never rise from poverty and hunger," he said.

German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, when asked his reaction to the Bush speech, said, "I think it's very important what Kofi Annan said about the rule of law in the 21st century so I don't want to go more into the details because this would be very apolite."

Tanzania's President Benjamin Mkapa said dozens of leaders at a meeting Monday agreed that

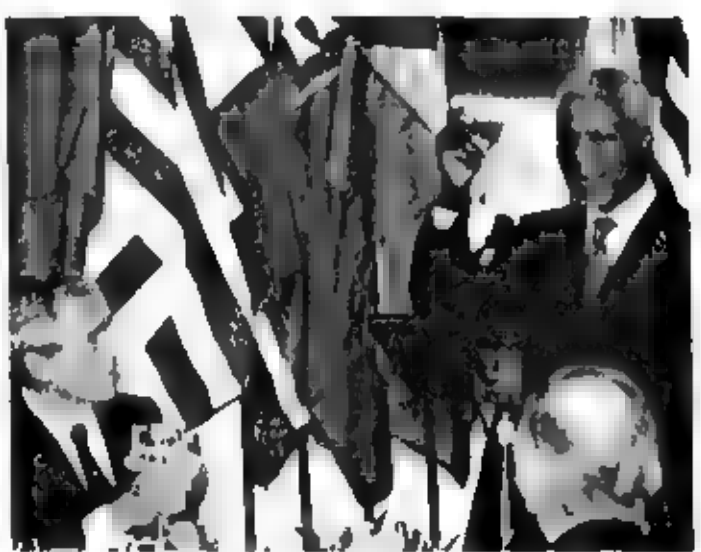
"globalization has produced both striking achievements and harmful distortions in global growth and development."

"We all agreed that, left unchecked, globalization will exacerbate the wealth gap—within and between nations—thereby planting the seeds of social instability and crime on a national and global scale," he said.

In his speech, Annan told world leaders that "today the rule of law is at risk around the world."

"Again and again, we see laws shamelessly disregarded—those that ordain respect for innocent life, for civilians, for the vulnerable—especially children," he said.

Annan pointed to the violence in Sudan's western Darfur region, which the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis.



UN Secretary General Kofi Annan (upper right) proposes a toast as President Bush looks during a luncheon for world leaders attending the opening day of the 59th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Sept. 21 at the UN headquarters in New York.

## Death toll in Haiti floods climbs to more than 700

GONAIVES, Haiti —Bodies lay in growing piles outside morgues as UN peacekeepers planned the first major distribution of food and water Wednesday in this city devastated by floods that tore apart families and left hungry crowds that have mobbed truckloads of aid.

The death toll from deluges unleashed by Tropical Storm Jeanne climbed to more than 700, Haitian officials said Tuesday, with more than 600 of them in Gonaives alone. More than 1,000 others were declared missing.

Carcasses of pigs, goats and dogs still floated in muddy waters slowly receding from the streets in Gonaives, Haiti's third-largest city with some 250,000 people. Not a house escaped damage. The homeless sloshed through the streets carrying belongings on their heads, while people with houses that still had roofs tried to dry scavenged clothes.

Flies buzzed around bloated corpses piled high at the city's three morgues. The electricity was off, and the stench of death hung over the city.

Relatives waited outside a morgue set up in the flood-damaged General Hospital all day to identify and bury victims. But vehicles to carry bodies to the cemetery never arrived. Most bodies

remained unidentified.

Destilor A. dajus, a 50-year-old farmer, said he and his six children climbed onto their roof to escape the floods. But he was at the morgue looking for his wife.

"I couldn't find her, but I knew the water had taken her," he said.

Red Cross volunteers put more than 100 bodies into body bags, leaving them in a pile outside the morgue.

"We're going to start burying people in mass graves," said Toussaint Kongo-Doudou, a spokesperson for the UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti.

Renel Corvil, a 32-year-old farmer, said he had come to the morgue every day since Saturday to look for his four missing children. On Tuesday, he found them. But after waiting all day for bodies to be taken to the cemetery, he left to bury a fifth child that already had been transported to the graveyard.

As they waited, survivors exchanged tales. "Everyone in my neighborhood who survived had climbed a tree," Corvil said.

Waterlines up to 3 meters high on Gonaives' buildings marked the worst of the storm that sent torrents of water and mudslides down denuded hills, destroying homes and crops.

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Yudhoyono maintains lead in polls

JAKARTA—Former Gen. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono remains on track for a landslide victory in Indonesia's first ever presidential elections, holding a steady lead Wednesday with about two thirds of votes counted. Of 90.8 million votes tallied so far, Yudhoyono accounted for 61 percent compared to 38 percent for incumbent Megawati Sukarnoputri. About 153 million people were eligible to vote in the elections, with initial estimates putting turnout at 80 percent. The final outcome from the election is not expected for days as results trickle in from across the vast Southeast Asian archipelago, but pollsters believe it is unlikely to change significantly. The Washington-based National Democratic Institute and its Indonesian partner, think tank LPJES, predicted pre-poll Yudhoyono would finish with 60.2 percent of the vote compared with Megawati's 39.8 percent.

### Al-Qaida operative got Australian visa

CANBERRA—A top al-Qaida operative acquired a visa to visit Australia a month before Sept. 11 2001, raising fears the terror group was actively plotting to strike the US ally, the government said Wednesday. It was not believed that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed traveled to Australia after being granted the visa in the name of an alias from the Australian High Commission in Pakistan, officials said. Khalid, one of Osama bin Laden's senior commanders, was arrested in Pakistan in February 2003 and is in US custody. He has been indicted over a foiled plan to blow up 11 US commercial airliners flying from Southeast Asia to the United States in 1995. "It concerns me that it happened," Prime Minister John Howard told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio. "Certainly everything is more effective (in issuing visas) as a result of all the changes that were made since Sept. 11, however the aliases involved were not known at the time and of course a lot more is now known." Khalid's visa was canceled about a year after it was issued when authorities found out about the use of the alias, Attorney General Philip Ruddock said.

### Brazil, Germany, India, Japan seek UN seats

NEW YORK—Brazil, Germany, India and Japan launched a united bid Tuesday for permanent UN Security Council seats, arguing that expanded membership was crucial to addressing new global threats. A joint declaration said all four countries, "based on the firmly shared recognition that they are legitimate candidates for permanent membership in an expanded Security Council, support each other's candidature." The statement followed a meeting between Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, and the Indian and Japanese prime ministers Manmohan Singh and Junichiro Koizumi, at a New York hotel on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Their proposal, which also envisages a permanent seat for Africa and an expansion of the non-permanent Council membership, would represent the largest shake-up at the top decision-making body of the United Nations in its nearly 60-year history. Reform of the 15-nation Security Council has the firm support of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who set up a high-level panel that is scheduled to offer concrete proposals for change in December. The council has had the same live permanent members with veto power—Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States—since the United Nations was established in the wake of World War II.

### 2 Iraqi women from jail may be freed

BAGHDAD—Iraqi authorities together with US forces have decided to free one of only two high-profile women prisoners currently in American custody, a ministry spokesperson said Wednesday. Ministry spokesperson Noori Abdul-Rahim Ibrahim, however, denied the decision was linked to a demand by militants who abducted two Americans and a Britisher calling for the release of all female Iraqi prisoners. "The Iraqi authorities have agreed with coalition forces to conditionally release Rihab Rashid Taha on bail," Ibrahim said. Taha, a scientist who became known as "Dr. Ghani" for helping Iraq make weapons out of anthrax, and Huda Salih Mahdi Amnash, a biotech researcher known as "Mrs. Anthrax" are the only two Iraqi women held in American custody, according to the US military.



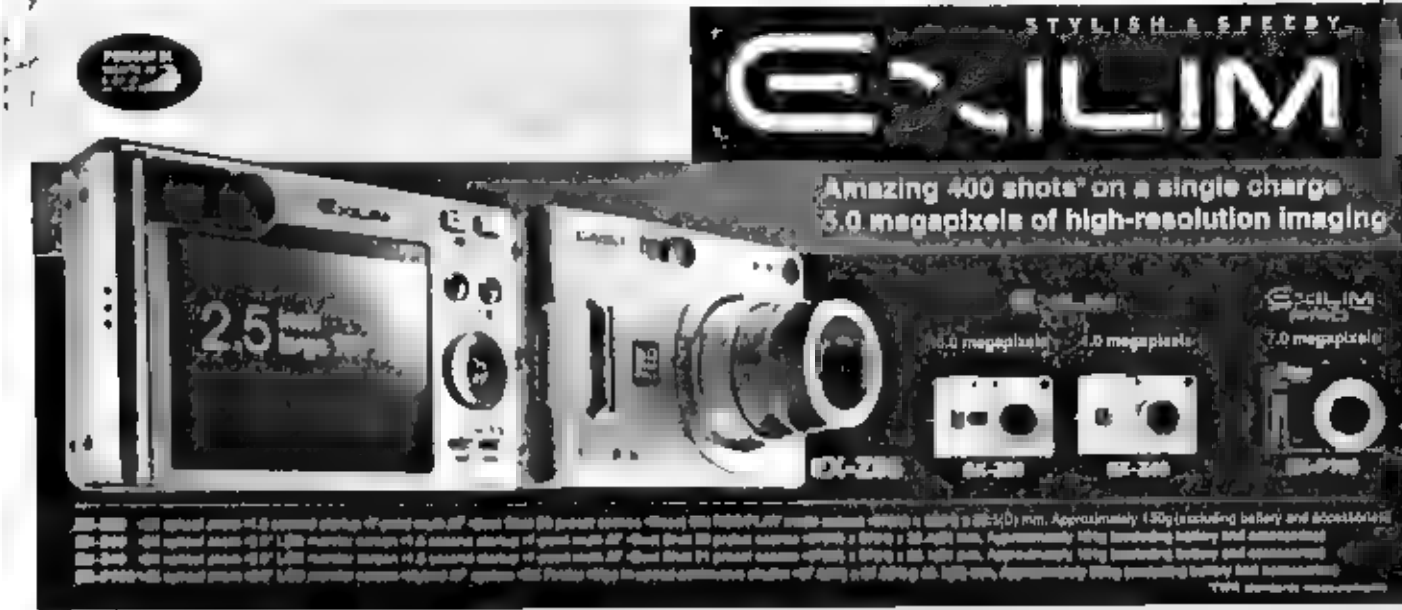
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# Asian-American voters favor Kerry, says poll

LOS ANGELES—Asian-Americans voters favor Democrat John Kerry for president against incumbent George W. Bush, the first national survey of the largely untapped segment of the US electorate showed Tuesday.

The survey, conducted for the Los Angeles Times and published on its website, said that of six million eligible Asian-American voters, around 43 percent would pick Kerry for president against 36 percent for Bush.

But the poll, conducted by the Tarance Group, Bendixen and Associates and New California Media between Aug. 20 and 30, also indicated that as many as one in five of them were still undecided about who to vote for on Nov. 2.

The multi-cultural population group was not unanimous in their support of the Democrat, with Chinese, South Asian and Japanese-American voters tilting toward Kerry, while Vietnamese, Korean



KERRY

and Filipino Americans were more in favor of Bush.

While Asian Americans remain a small



voting block with only around three million expected to register to vote, their ballots could have some influence over

the outcome of the election, the poll showed.

About 20 percent of Asian-American voters remained undecided, a figure that could prove significant as 22 percent of them, or 525,000, live in key battleground states such as Florida and Michigan and could influence the tightly fought polls.

"Traditionally, neither party has spent much effort reaching out to Asian Americans," said David Lee, executive director of the Chinese American Voters Education Committee, which helped support the poll.

"As a result I think you have a very large untapped population," he added.

The survey also indicated that while Asian Americans were largely inclined to vote Democratic in the 2000 presidential race, that balance had thinned in 2004.

Democratic candidate Al Gore had a lead of around 14 percent over Bush in support from Asian Americans in 2000.

Kerry, however, has currently mustered only a 7-percent advantage, the poll showed.

The poll of 1,004 registered voters was conducted in nine languages across 47 states in the 10 days ahead of the Republican National Convention held in New York from Aug. 30 to Sept. 2, and had an overall margin of error of around 3 percent.

The survey also indicated that the key electoral issue for Asian Americans—many of whom are new immigrants to the United States—was the economy.

About 47 percent of those surveyed said jobs and the economy were the single biggest issue for the next president, while only 22 percent picked the Iraq conflict or the war on terrorism.

The survey indicated that nearly one million more Asian Americans were expected to register to vote this year than in 2000, when 2.4 million signed up. AFP

# Young Filipinos protecting the environment



To many of us, an unspoiled environment is just one of our rich memories of childhood. But to an increasing number of young people, this longing need not be just a memory. An unspoiled environment should be a continuing and lasting legacy for future generations.

This year, 13 students from various colleges and universities in the country are joining the growing number of Bayer Young Environmental Envoys (BYEEs) aware of the need to protect the environment. They will join other student envoys from across Asia, Latin America, and Europe in a continuing journey of environmental protection and preservation that started when they participated in the search for excellence in environmental awareness and care.



## A study trip to Germany as main attraction

Without doubt, the main attraction in the BYEE search is the weeklong all-expense-paid study tour of Germany from November 27 to December 3 this year for the top five of the 13 student envoys. The top five Philippine envoys will be part of a 50-student contingent from 12 countries that include: China, India, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Korea, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Poland.

As part of the program, the lucky envoys will learn about the three major components in the development of industrial environmental protection. These are: product-integrated and process-integrated environmental protection, as well as "end-of-pipe" waste management. Short of technical details, the trip is a rare opportunity for young people to get first-hand impressions of the broad spectrum of environmental protection measures that government and industry use in highly advanced countries like Germany.

The program starts at Bayer's headquarters in the city of Leverkusen, Germany, where the student envoys will visit the company's state-of-the-art facilities, including the management of waste from its various production processes. The envoys will have the chance to observe how a former landfill is being converted into a public park as part of a "land remediation" process. The students will also visit Bayer's agricultural center to see how products are continually being developed or refined with the objective of making them environment friendly through the "Eco-Check," a system that assesses the ecological impact of Bayer's products to the environment. The envoys will also visit the municipal waste management facilities of Leverkusen to learn about citizen education programs on waste management and see for themselves how residents go out of their way to segregate solid waste for processing in recycling centers.

A highlight of the trip is a cruise of the River Rhine on board the laboratory ship of Germany's State Environment Protection Agency to observe water quality testing.

## Part of a broader effort to promote environmental protection

The trip to Germany is just a component of the package meant to keep the student envoys busy in environmental protection programs. It is because participation in the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Program requires continuing involvement and commitment. Student envoys take part in a sustainable international program that relies on networking to ensure its continuity. The program ensures this by making all student envoys members of the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Club—a formal organization of incumbent and past BYEEs who network to discuss and pursue environmental projects and issues. They are given access to the BYEE website complete with bulletin board and chat room facilities. Those without access to Internet can rely on the twice-yearly BYEE newsletter for all BYEEs in Asia. The Philippines, at present, has 56 BYEEs from over 20 provinces throughout the country.

The search for this year's BYEEs started when college students from all over the Philippines were asked to submit essays on their personal contributions to the environment and how these have made a difference in their communities and the country. Short-listed candidates were asked to come for interviews to enable the judges to validate the content of their essays and gauge the extent of their environmental awareness and involvement.

## Beginnings

The Young Environmental Envoy Program originated in Thailand in 1995 as a project to educate the youth in the global efforts to save and protect the environment. In 1996, Bayer joined the program as a corporate sponsor. In 1997, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), through its regional office for Asia Pacific, adopted the program under its umbrella.



From left, Werner Wenning, chairman of Bayer's Management Board; Prof. Klaus Toepfer, UNEP executive director; and Dr. Udo Oels, Board Member of Bayer with responsibility for the Environment, announce the Bayer-UNEP partnership for youth environmental education.

In 2001, the program was extended to the Philippines and Singapore. The following years saw the participation of envoys from India and China.

This year, the partnership between UNEP and Bayer moved into a global level. Bayer, thus, became the first private sector organization to become a UNEP partner in environmental education projects for young people. Prof. Klaus Toepfer, UNEP executive director, and Werner Wenning, chairman of Bayer's Management Board, signed the historic agreement in June this year.

Today, UNEP and Bayer have a close partnership in various initiatives, related to the environment, for the youth.

These include the Art and Writing Competition for young people to stimulate worldwide attention on the cause of the environment in commemoration of World Environment Day.

On a continuing basis, through the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Program, UNEP and Bayer hope to identify youth leaders in environmental protection, provide the youth with opportunities to learn about existing technologies, facilities and practices, facilitate networking and exchange of views and experiences in environmental protection among the youth and encourage youth leaders to establish activities or programs to promote environmental awareness and protection.

## Ongoing projects

Protecting the environment has become a passion for an increasing number of young people. A couple of examples are worth mentioning.

Janice Luo, who works as an environmental scientist at Maunslu Philippines, became the first Filipino to be admitted to the masters program in Environmental Change and Management at Oxford University through a full scholarship under the Shell Centenary Chevening Scholarship Fund.

Gilbert Hamera of Zamboanga founded the Chemical Engineers for Kalikasan (CHEKALIKASAN) to spearhead a campaign called *Banay Isak, Sagip Hanga* in Baguio. He also initiated a project on the use of industrial waste catalysts to produce low cost regenerated catalysts for petroleum refineries. This earned for him the Tower of Excellence for Outstanding Plant Design given by the Philippine Institute of Chemical Engineers-Junior Chapter.

The young people are taking greater responsibility in leading their communities in environmental care and developing in their peers the same love and concern for the environment. And their elders can only watch and guide them with approval.

## The Bayer Young Environmental Envoys Helping to preserve Mother Earth

Jonathan D. Zamoras

Albert L. Genato

Antonina P. Vera

Catherine May L. Alberto

Celso H. Juculan

Joseph Jeffrey S. Uy

Rainier A. Bahayan

Ma. Angela N. Flores

Maria Q. Benlun

Jose C. Apuyan Jr.

Merivita M. Salvador

June H. Guljan

Michael Francis A. Lopez

This new breed of young people with a passion for the environment is making a difference for all of us. Selected in a nationwide search, these college students are now part of a growing international network of young people deeply involved in environmental protection.

Tonight, Bayer Philippines, together with UNEP, its partner for youth environmental education, recognizes them for their contributions to preserving and protecting our environment.

Bayer Young Environmental Envoy

UNEP PARTNERS FOR YOUTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT



# OPINION

Text on your feedback: Inquirer opn normalcity@message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

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## Books for burning

If former President Joseph Estrada is thinking of putting out a sequel to his popular "Eruptions," he ought to consider including the following items:

- In India, there is a class of people who cannot be touched ("hundi magalaw").
- The sitar is a musical instrument whose strings are made from teakwood.
- Warlords are people who own land.
- Ramadan is not the holy month of fasting as Muslims know it to be, but a commemoration of the occasion when "Muhammad" accepted the holy writ written in Arabic.
- Sun Yat-sen founded the Chinese Communist Party.
- Mao Tse-tung conquered China and turned it into the most populous communist country in the world.

Punny? Well, yes—until one finds out that these are contained not in a book of jokes, but in a high school textbook used in all public high schools. In other words, these are some of the lessons second-year high school students will absorb and perhaps carry with them for the rest of their lives, unless their teachers know enough and care enough to correct these errors contained in the prescribed textbook for "Heograpiya, Kasaysayan at Kultura."

Such mistakes do not come few and far between in the textbook, "Asya: Noon, Ngayon at sa Hinaharap," published by SD Publications and printed in Thailand. Antonio Calipjo Go, academic supervisor of the Manan School of Quezon City, has counted a total of 431 errors in the book of 316 pages or an average of more than one error per page, including passages that are confusing or simply unintelligible. In fact, some information contained in the books can be downright insulting and incendiary to some people. For instance, how do the Chinese feel about being described as a people who like to use opium? And how do Muslims feel about being told that many Islamic ideas come from Judaism, Christianity and the Old Testament as well as from the Virgin and St. Michael? Or that many of their mosques were designed by Christian architects and are lavishly decorated?

Go, who has made it his personal crusade to denounce substandard textbooks being used in both public and private schools, came out with a paid ad Monday branding the distribution of the textbook as an "invisible crime." And indeed it is a crime, in more ways than one. Out of carelessness or ignorance, the authors have been spreading wrong information about geography, history and culture. If these are the things students learn, then truly ignorance is bliss. At least those who don't get such lessons wouldn't get confused when they know the truth.

And the Department of Education is abetting the spread of ignorance by approving the textbook for use in public secondary schools, the only one on this particular subject that has such an official imprimatur. But doesn't the DepEd have a committee of experts who read and review textbooks before they are approved for use in schools? Where were they when this book was reviewed, or were all of the committee members blissfully unaware of all the 431 errors in this one single textbook?

If the DepEd still thinks that its principal duty is to impart the right education, it should immediately order the recall of this textbook from schools and bookstores. If the government bought copies of the textbook and distributed them to public schools, it should order the publisher to withdraw them and reimburse whatever amounts were paid, as required by the Government Procurement Reform Law. Then it should burn them before the minds of millions more of our students are poisoned by all the wrong information it contains.

## Targeting symptoms

THE KILLING of innocent civilians is as odious in Russia as it is in Nairobi or New York or Madrid or Baghdad or Tel Aviv or Gaza or Cape Town. But it seems clear that such attacks are likely to continue, from a variety of sources and in a variety of countries, for the foreseeable future.

Three years on from Sept. 11, one lesson must be that the world will get nowhere if it targets the symptoms rather than the root causes of such attacks. The latter are more often rooted in long-standing injustices inflicted upon entire peoples.

Washington's "war on terror" is fanning the flames of such attacks in the Middle East and around the world. The most dangerous elements of the so-called Bush doctrine were announced within days of Sept. 11: that countries were either "with us or against us," and that the US military would strike preemptively, wherever and whenever it wanted.

The Bush administration has made good on these promises. And, above all, it has created the sort of chaos in Iraq that is likely to fan the flames of resentment for generations to come.

This Day (Lagos, Nigeria)



## Me Tarzan

### VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

A BRASS-KNUCKLE brawl raging in Cebu City pits Mayor Tomas Osmeña against lawyers and broadcasters. The scrap shows that tensions, between 19th century municipal structures and new millennium issues, can turn incendiary overnight.

The mayor threatened to dump collected garbage at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Integrated Bar of the Philippines offices. Those "who support environmental laws make local governments pay a certain amount."

IBP Cebu earlier served notice of lodging a citizens' suit—for Solid Waste Management Act infractions—against four metro area sites: Cebu, Lapu-Lapu, Mactan and Talisay.

But the day was not yet over. GMA News 7 would be stripped of its business permit. Osmeña said, "You won't sell (City Hall) anytime? I'll close you."

The Kapisanan ng mga Brodcasters ng Pilipinas had earlier blackballed delinquent clients, among them: a sardine firm, a show-biz group, for a time, sweepstakes. Seven TV and radio stations had collectibles worth P1.7 million for airline City Hall used. The IOUs date back to the period 1998-2001.

KBP's settle-debts-first policies, Osmeña asserted, violated freedom of the press. They export "money from the city government by imposing censorship."

That dySS Bobby Nalzo, this year's "Golden Dove" awardee, hosts a program critical of "His Honor" was irrelevant. "I'll start with the biggest: GMA," the mayor said. "Everybody's afraid of media. I'm not."

A hefty dose of Prozac can do wonders for "Me Tarzan" chest-thumping. But governance by bile doesn't help cities confronted by exploding demands from growing numbers of indigents.

"Thinking small" is inadequate, the World Bank stresses in "Making Cities Livable." For the future, city officials must "think different."

"Since the 1950s, the dominant model for providing basic infrastructure and services has been government," the WB notes. "Cities need

to turn away from an unsuccessful model that leaves the most dynamic providers of basic services outside delivery mechanisms."

Cities must instead reach out to the private sector. Local governments need to trim their sails, stop doles and serve in the modest—but more challenging—role of visionary.

The "quiet revolution in local governance" is the crafting of partnership-based models, the WB says. Advances will come from those who design policies to harness private sector resources and citizen participation.

Indeed, "the powerful desire of the poor to acquire and use assets to improve their well-being and reduce their vulnerability" can be the staunchest ally for urban reformers, the Asian Development Bank adds.

Cebu's compounding problems differ from most cities only in scale. Migrants double its population rate increase over that of other provinces. In the city itself, 41 out of every 100 kids are stunted by chronic hunger. Aquifers are "overdrawn" by 170,000 cubic meters daily, resulting in dry taps or brackish wells.

But some are unique—and stem from "Me Tarzan" decisions. Cebu's imploding yen-loans are the classic example.

Abetted by a cowed city council, Osmeña signed a P1.9-billion loan for the South Reclamation project. The dollar then fetched P26. Advice to share reclaimed land, instead of paying cash, was spurned. So was the suggestion to insure against currency fluctuations.

Serial devaluations sent the peso plummeting to P56-\$1 today. And the debt went through the roof to P4.33 billion. City Hall doctors its books—using 1996 exchange rates—to

reflect only P2.8 billion in IOUs, the Commission on Audit complained.

Cebu's total liabilities today tower over all 102 cities at P3.62 billion. (Cagayan de Oro is second at P934 million.) Those loans strap every man, woman and child, within city limits, with a debt burden of P60,654—compared to the P44,548 for 84 million Filipinos.

"Policy black holes" are seen in loan bills soaring, in 2007, to P970 million. That's half the city's annual budget, the Sun Star noted. There's no policy on water, peri-urban areas, land use, flood control, sewage, disaster preparedness, citizen participation and other critical concerns.

After a life-threatening illness, Osmeña retook the mayorship in June 2002. Cebu Daily News editorially welcomed his return saying:

"The angel of death has many eyes" a Yiddish proverb notes. Osmeña looked into those eyes, as we all must one day, and walked away. (In the past), he blustered that "there's nothing to fiscalize under my watch." We hope this brush with our common mortality produced a new sense of reality and a more compassionate mayor."

But hopes for partnership-models have curdled with more "Me Tarzan" outbreaks since then.

His innovative plan for citizen participation in budgeting was ripped up. He laded P32 million to 61 politically friendly barangays; the 18 that voted wrong were shut out. "They don't recognize me," he fumed. "I won't recognize them."

A P151-million bill from Toyo Construction would be paid only over his dead body, he declared. He backtracked—only to dip into Japanese loans to pay interest on Japanese loans. Flanked by bodyguards, pistol in hand, he snapped at a double-parked cabbie: "You challenge the mayor?" Me Tarzan. Arsenic Lason would have guffawed to death.

The mayor lit into the lawyers and broadcasters this week. "He lost respect for us?" IBP president Democrito Barcenas asked. "Tell him: the feeling is mutual." Me Tarzan also.

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## Carless

### THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



I SAW my friend Jack Yabut on ANC last Monday. He was plugging for the World Carless Day, which is tomorrow. Like Earth Day and No Smoking Day, World Carless Day means to draw attention to a bane, in this case smog and traffic caused by motor vehicles, and to find ways to lessen it.

Jack himself had several suggestions—organizing car pools, taking public transport (chief of them the MRT and LRT), biking, and walking to the office or home if they are not too far off. The trick is to take things one step at a time, he said, but to do them with some regularity. Maybe you can take public transport once a week, quite apart from your car-ban day. You do that regularly, it becomes a habit, and habits make for attitudinal changes.

Asked what inspired him to take up this crusade, Jack said that honestly it wasn't lofty heroism but plain self-interest. He wants to be able to breathe reasonably clean air, a fact that has become less and less possible in Metro Manila today.

His concern is not exaggerated. I myself have a graphic image of Metro Manila's pollution in my head. I was on an out-of-town trip one summer's day some years ago, and as usual I took the dawn flight. I do that because I can no longer tolerate traffic, it wastes my time and frays my nerves. The plane had just taken off and I could see gray light breaking in the east. Then to my surprise, I saw a line streaking across the horizon just above the sleeping city. Everything below it was dark as soot and everything above it was clear as sky. It took some moments for me to realize what that line was. It was where the smog began, or rose up to. It startled me to realize I lived in the very depths of that dark soot. I was glad I was leaving it, if only temporarily.

The biggest contributor there are, of course, the motor vehicles. And private cars—however more efficient their exhausts are compared to those of buses and jeepneys—are the main culprit. That is so because of their sheer inefficiency in ferrying one or two persons from Point A to Point B at any given time compared to buses

and jeepneys and trains that haul a horde of bedraggled carcasses over the same time and space. Private cars are also easily the biggest contributor to traffic by the same token. Too much space, too few people.

I myself drive, but I feel no small pang of conscience when I see tricycles and buses groaning with tricycles ply the main roads, holding up traffic for the faster vehicles, and the buses block my path, particularly in the part of SM that leads out to Edsa (a simple problem the half dozen or so traffic aides there can't seem to solve); but the recognition I am lugging my sole carcass over some distance while they are doing so hundreds of them gives me pause.

I do take the MRT, as I've said in an earlier column, going to Makati, at least on the occasions I am persuaded to go there. It is not my favorite part of the metropolis; Manila is, for reasons that have nothing to do with Atienza. It is not merely that I manage to escape the huge parking lot known as Edsa—one of the joys of taking the MRT is looking down at all the cars not moving below and knowing you are not there—it is that I manage to escape the cares of finding a place to park in the huge non-parking lot known as Makati. Jack is right sometimes, enlightened self-interest does the trick.

I know the arguments that have been raised against public transport. Mainly, that it sucks. It is crowded, it is slow and it is a pickpocket's or holdupman's paradise. The argument is not without merit, although, like the issue of leaving the country and working abroad, it is a chicken-and-egg tangle. The solution is itself

the problem. We leave the country, the country gets worse. Others find more reason to leave it. We buy more and more cars, public transport is left to the dogs or the poor, we buy more and more cars. And kill ourselves—and our children—with lung problems.

Or cancer: Haven't you noticed that's been on the rise over the years? But that's another story.

Clearly, government must do its job of improving public transport. Chief of them by running more trains. Omar Lopez had an interesting letter the other day (PDI, 9/21/04) saying we are the only country on earth that doesn't have a decent train system and enumerating the many merits of having one. Chief of them making travel easier to and from the provinces, thereby decongesting Metro Manila.

I've said the same thing a number of times. The problem isn't the demonstrable lack of merit of trains, it is the demonstrable lack of will of government. The one thing that stands out in its way is the car lobby, which includes the sellers of cars, gasoline, tires and other car-related products as well as the public officials, elective or appointive, who corner funds with which to build substandard, or even non-existent, roads and bridges.

Government must do its job, but we have to do ours, too. Cars aren't just a means of transport in this country, they are a state of mind. They carry with them a culture—a "car culture"—that has our urban dwellers agog over Ford's invention. Jack is right, too about taking things one step at a time. Literally, in the case of walking. That is something by the way you learn when you visit Europe and other countries: though their dwellers live far more luxuriously than we do, they have not forgotten how to walk. Their own car culture has not wrecked their walking culture. A fellow Filipino once complained to me in one such sojourn: "Don't they ever think of having tricycles here?" No, my dear, they don't. Which is why they live far more luxuriously than we do.

Carless is not the end of the world. It's just the start of it.



**Unfair****POLITICAL  
TIDBITS****Belinda  
Olivares-Cumanan**

stand." The appointment of an El Shaddai spokesperson as administrator of the Light Rail Transit Authority is another one that is hard to justify. "Ees a puzlement," to borrow the words of the King of Siam in a Broadway play.

Revilla Sr. is 77 years old. Despite his assurance that he is in "peak condition," there are many others far healthier in mind and body. His record as senator for 12 years was uneventful. The Senate media cannot recall a time they heard him express an opinion except once, during the Erap impeachment, when he pointed out just how heavy a wad of bills is. And all through the congressional canvass last June, which I covered assiduously, I never heard Revilla's voice even once. What puzzles people is why the President has to accommodate him when she had vowed that in her "second wind," she would be "non-political." Revilla's son has already "inherited" the Senate's public works committee.

The Palace was quoted as saying that Jose Gangan, president of PNOG-Petrochemical Development Corp., and Rufino Bomasang, president of PNOG-Exploration Corp., "resigned" their posts and GMA accepted their resignations. The more accurate way of stating it is that the two technocrats were not "re-nominated" by GMA. That is entirely her prerogative. Reports also say they wanted to return to the private sector.

But clearly a disinformation was a report heard on radio, attributed to a Palace official, that the two PNOG executives' "resignations" were accepted because they refused to take a cut in their high salaries. That's grossly unfair to Gangan and

Bomasang. Gangan and Bomasang are personal friends of mine. I know they would have agreed readily to a pay cut, except that they were not re-appointed. Accusing them of refusing to take a pay cut was most unjust especially because they served government well for a long time. Bomasang, a mining engineer who graduated from the University of the Philippines cum laude, and a board member, is often referred to as "Mr. Energy," having served no less than five presidents. The Manila editorial yesterday rightly referred to him as a "national treasure." Lawyer-accountant Gangan, a Harvard graduate, holds the distinction of being the youngest ever to be accredited certified public accountant (at age 17). Those are two fine officials.

Carissa R. Cruz is a most upset young lady. Attacks have come her way that she got her position as assistant secretary in the Department of Trade and Industry because her mom is the high-powered Gina de Venecia and her stepfather is the Speaker. That is very unfair, as she is highly qualified.

An Ateneo graduate, she started out with Ctem under the dynamic directoress Eh Pinto Manaoz. Carissa won a partial Boston University scholarship from Time Warner where she finished her MBA and was honored the student leadership award. She then worked with the San Francisco office of the investment firm Morgan Stanley, then with Asia Star Ventures in Palo Alto, where she helped out in deal generation and international business matching development between the United States and Asia.

It was very tempting for Carissa to stay abroad and work there, but as she told me, "I wanted to come home and serve here." Working under Trade Undersecretary Nelly Favi-Villafuerte, Carissa helps out in the operations group which is in charge of projects in the regions, such as port facilities, and looks into export possibilities.

I advised Carissa to just ignore the few critics and learn to deal with the intrigues that many of us have for merienda.

**VP Noli responds to 'riles'****HUMAN  
FACE****Ma. Ceres P. Doyo**

for transportation, as well as food vouchers.

"From 2002 to March 2004, seven consultations have been held in Kalookan alone which were convened by HUDCC, NHA, an attached agency of HUDCC, and participated in by the concerned agencies including Philippine National Railways, North Luzon Railway Corporation-Bases Conversion Development Authority, National Anti-Poverty Commission, Philippine Commission on the Urban Poor, Commission on Human Rights, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Education, and the Department of Health, as well as NGOs such as the Urban Poor Associates.

"In all these consultations, the concerned families and communities were fully informed of their relocation options. We also made it clear that the resettlement program will be beneficiary-led and in-city, to the extent allowed by the budget. This is to minimize the adverse effects of dislocation among the affected families.

The resettlement program likewise provides for an assistance package amounting to P201,970.00 per family. This amount covers serviced home lots, housing materials loan, livelihood assistance, water/power connections as well as food allowance. As indicated earlier, we are also offering the *Balik Probinsya* program to families who will opt to go back to their provinces.

"We are now prioritizing the clearing of the ROW for the Malabon alignment which will connect to the Kalookan segment. This will affect 3,399 families, of which 400 have already expressed their desire to vacate the area voluntarily.

"While the HUDCC-NHA has already held previous consultations with communities who will

be affected by future clearing and relocation operations in the Malabon area, local inter-agency committee (LIAC) meetings are continuously being convened every two weeks by the local government of Malabon. These meetings are participated in by various agencies such as the PCU, DOTC, NACP, HUDCC-NHA, and representatives of various people's organizations.

"Meanwhile, parallel consultations are also being undertaken weekly by the HUDCC-NHA and PCUP with the affected residents. We would like to invite you to attend these consultations to observe how they are conducted and to give you a better idea of the issues and concerns of the various sectors involved.

"As to the funding aspect, the resettlement program for both North and South Rail settlers will require an estimated P8 billion. HUDCC is now in the final stage of contracting a loan from the National Development Company amounting to P3.5 billion. This will be sourced from a planned Issuance of NDC bonds.

"The Department of Budget and Management, on the other hand, committed to immediately release P100 million to NHA, and another P150 million within the month for the project. This will be used to start the relocation along the Malabon alignment by the end of this month.

"Much of the work still lies ahead of us, and we remain firm in our commitment to protect the welfare of the families to be relocated.

"As the new HUDCC chairman, I bring to this position my long-time personal and professional experience in dealing with and serving the Filipino masses. Thus, I can personally guarantee you that I will exert every effort to make sure that the families living along the railways will not have to go through a worst phase in the course of giving them a better life away from the dangers and the poor living conditions which they have had to bear with for a long time.

"Thank you very much.

"Sincerely yours,

Vice President Noli de Castro."

Send comments to [ceresp@info.com.ph](mailto:ceresp@info.com.ph)

**Macapagal the First****THE LONG VIEW****Manuel L. Quezon III**

He was a famous campaigner, reaching almost every corner of our archipelago in his attempt to glad-hand as many voters as possible: no candidate before or since has matched his record in this regard. Of the occupants of the Palace, only a colonial governor, Leonard Wood, personally visited so many parts of the country. He was not the most charismatic of leaders, nor the most politically adept, but he was genuine in his high regard for the common man, and did his best to alleviate his condition. He was responsible for the only genuine land reform program in our history, which, like his other populist programs, cost him dearly politically.

Had he chosen to forego the limelight after he was president, he would have enjoyed a reputation which would have gained in luster as the years went by; so great was the contrast between his personal probity and that of the man who replaced him. But in a conscious effort to secure one more distinction in history—for he was a man very conscious of history and the place he wanted to have in it—he ran for, and became, the second president of the Constitutional Convention, replacing the deceased Carlos R. Garcia. It would be his position as president of that convention which would reduce his standing in the eyes of many people and gain for him a more ambivalent place in the memory of his people.

Macapagal once said that "The Constitution is a temple in which free citizens worship not the pagan god of despotism but the divinity of liberty." But when the era of despotism arrived, he proved

remarkably timid in the face of Marcos' apostasy to democracy. Macapagal did little, if anything, to resist the transformation of the Con-ven to a rubber stamp assembly for the legitimization of martial law; something the oppositionist delegates never forgot, and which served to make hollow his subsequent attempts to apply for political asylum at the US Embassy, and his effort to convene a rump assembly in the late '70s to nullify the Marcos Constitution. This part of his life was the supreme opportunity to become a hero—and instead, as the famous saying goes, he missed the bus.

After the fall of the dictatorship, he did get to enjoy being honored as an elder statesman and former president. Of all our presidents, he worked the longest under the greatest number of presidents: a president's president, so to speak. His influence on our nation's psyche is, to my mind, real and unmeasured, but will be—when stock is properly taken—seen to be profound. His decision to declare the Revolution of 1986 "unfinished," and his policy of setting aside our July 4 independence day in favor of June 12, itself a good move, while simultaneously junking a sense of appreciation of the movement that achieved our modern independence (itself a terrible move which only made the Filipino identity crisis worse), had great consequences.

Macapaga tried to make history but was overtaken by it. No greater proof of this can be found than the way his very name is written. Always, in his public and private documents, he was "Diosdado Macapagal," the name with which he signed his oath of office and all documents of state. But today, to an increasing number of ignorant people, under the auspices of an increasingly ignorant official apparatus, he is "Diosdado E. Macapagal." Why? Because Ferdinand E. Marcos decreed it would be he who would decide on the name of his predecessors. Even if they were, like Macapagal, still alive.

Comments welcome at [www.quezon.ph](http://www.quezon.ph)

**Panic attack**

THE PAST days have been quite tense in our office. There has been so much concern among the staff over the current state of our lives. Debates have raged over what we should do to bring about change.

There are seven of us in our unit—six males and our boss who is the only female. Only three of us are unmarried. Our average age is 25 and we are starting to wonder about our chances of making it big one day. Big for us means having our own house, buying a car and being able to send our kids to a good school. Throw in a small farm, and it would be nirvana.

Given our country's current state of affairs, it seems inconceivable that we would be able to go very far in our chosen careers. Working in the government means a lot of hard work. It's like being sent to boot camp for 30 years. And now, with the price of crude oil increasing frequently, pulling along the prices of basic commodities, I see a bleak future for me.

The Filipino people are being battered relentlessly. Gravity seems to have a double standard. Prices go up and never go down, while salaries remain bound to the ground. I dread watching TV in the morning lest I hear that fares have been increased again and I won't be able to pay for a ride.

I'm sick of eating noodles and canned goods. My guts crave real food. But my financial status has followed our country's financial condition. In other words, my finances are a shambles.

Is there a future for me? None of my friends can give me a sensible answer.

To add to the feeling of hopelessness, it seems like the clouds are here to stay for quite a while. It looks like we are in for a rough ride in the next two years, as economists from the University of the Philippines have warned. It doesn't sound like things will get better soon. I am just keeping my fingers crossed and praying we don't turn into another Argentina or take ourselves back into the Middle Ages.

In the face of such doomsday economics, my immediate concerns are: What options do I have? Is it time to change careers? What career would that be? Was I right in choosing Political Science as my undergraduate course? Maybe once I dreamed of being a hotshot lawyer connected with a big Makati firm. But look at me now: I haven't even gone to law school after graduating five years ago. And last year, I saw that ambition being flushed down the drain. Rising tuition and book prices forced me to put on hold the dream of adding a title to my proper name.

Still every time I get this panic attack, I comfort myself with the thought that only seven out of every 100 Filipino graduate from college, of which only one percent comes from families living below the poverty line. If memory serves me right, around three or four million Filipinos are jobless. So, the majority of our country's population is worse off than me. What right do I have to be complaining?

But then I wonder how the people of Payatas or Stooley Mountain take news of this kind. Or, do they even care? The danger is if they have accepted their fate in complete surrender, if they have reached the point when they believe they are beyond salvation.

My guiding principle as well as my ultimate goal in life was: work hard, save hard, retire early and buy a farm. From the looks of it, I will never be able to buy a garden on a government worker's pay check. A farm? I don't think I will be able to afford one, at least not in this millennium.

Most of my contemporaries in our province are already raising families of their own. It appears only logical that I would soon follow suit. But when I see the hardship of life painted on the faces of the clients we serve at the Department of Social Welfare and Development, I reckon that perpetual bachelorhood is the better option.

I am afraid I won't be able to provide a quality life for my wife and children. The definition of quality life is changed every now and then by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), but what doesn't change is its tendency to become more and more expensive.

So, what do I do now? Do I pack my things and head home? Do I have a fighting chance of making my life a success? Ask a cigarette vendor on Edsa, or a newspaper boy in Cubao, or a sampaguita vendor in Kamuning, a friend of mine once suggested. Can we say ours is the better life?

Conrado de Quiros said it is all a matter of pursuing what we think is the passion of our hearts. The pursuit of happiness, living itself, is seldom a smooth journey. It is bound to dull our hopes, bludgeon our dreams and wear us down. But so long as it doesn't tear us apart, we have a chance.

Enough of this! It is time to get moving. Musing and worrying about these things will not bring me any closer to my dreams.

Tito Lyndon C. Lemos, 27, works with the Department of Social Welfare and Development as a project development officer. He is currently taking his master's in public administration at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

**THEY SAID****Elusive dream**

"I still dream of justice after all these years."  
—Seventy-year-old Faustina Valeriano, whose husband and son were gunned down by a team of soldiers and militiamen in 1988

**Hi-octane management**

"I had to cover a big area because I was a hands-on manager who followed up to ensure that projects are completed."

—Presidential aide Luis Lorenson, defending his use of government money for just part worth P2.5 million when he was still agriculture secretary

**Early vote**

"There's too many young people dying. I know where my vote's going."

—Anderson Nesbitt (no fan of President George W. Bush) who recently got his US citizenship after leaving his racy Caribbean nation in 1990

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## Robot economists

FINANCE Secretary Juanita Amatong has announced that the government would offer a "final, final" tax amnesty to "tax evaders and tax cheats." Meanwhile, President Macapagal-Arroyo was reported as reminding regularly the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs to "punish" tax evaders. Other reports noted that, in the last 13 years, the government had given amnesties 15 times to tax cheats.

So, how in heaven's name can the government expect rich taxpayers to pay their taxes correctly if it gives tax amnesties to tax evaders? Even those who outright cheated the government of taxes, as those involved in the P1.3 billion tax credit scam, are getting off scot-free?

And yet, University of the Philippines and other government economists are proposing additional taxes that would impact mostly on the poor who can't escape taxes. Like the tax on text messaging, disguised as a franchise tax or windfall tax or telecommunications profit, which in fact

is a service tax to be imposed on all users of text messaging.

Like the 10-percent Value Added Tax, which every consumer pays every time he makes a purchase. Now the UP economists want the VAT to be raised 12 percent, even though only 3 percent of the tax is actually remitted to the government. The 7 percent goes to businessmen who pocket the taxes after paying part of them to BIR examiners to keep them mum. And what about the proposed additional tax on oil products despite their unprecedented high prices?

What the government and the UP economists lack is imagination and common sense. They are robots doing exactly what they have been trained to do—act according to the buttons pushed by their foreign masters, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

What has our country come to?

—LILY PAMAOS,  
Toril, Davao City,  
lilypamaos@yahoo.com

## OPINION

### LETTERS

## Fencing off railways

IN CONNECTION with Ceres E Doyo's column "Bantay riles," (PDI, 9/09/04) I suggest the putting up of concrete fences on both sides of the railway system—at least about 10 feet high. The enclosed portion (including the rails) should be declared off-limits; if trespassed, the violators should be penalized. This will solve the problem of squatting on railways and I think the squatters will be grateful.

Considering that the squatter areas concerned are found only in some concentrated places, the fences will not cost as much as the alternatives: uprooting the squatters (political, social, economic and moral repercussions, etc.) or keeping the status quo which, for obvious reasons, is not really that attractive.

—GADDIE B. MAALA,  
Marikina City,  
gaddie\_maala@yahoo.com

## Win-win solution for Winner, Atiensa

THE CONTROVERSY over the lot at Arroceros Street, Manila, which was purchased from the Department of Education by the city of Manila out of the Special Education Fund, remains a nagging issue.

Manila Mayor Lito Ateña, the administrators, teachers and other school personnel would like to construct on that lot a division office that is nature friendly. According to them, the building will be put up without cutting down trees.

On the other hand, the Winner Foundation opposes the construction of the office building for fear that it will destroy Manila's only forested park which serves to filter pollution. Its members are afraid that century-old trees will be felled.

Both sides stand pat on their respective positions. The debates on the issue have become emotional and clouded and are leading nowhere but to a "nobody wins" situation.

The Manila Association of Public Secondary School Administrators (MAPSSA) believes there is a win-win solution to this issue. Mayor Ateña's objectives and the opposers can still be served well through

a solution that will lead to the realization of our vision of a development-oriented Manila. Simply put, the mayor and the opposers can sit together to thresh out their differences. This has never been done since day one. Whatever points were raised for or against the problem were done through press releases, rallies and counter-rallies, and the like. Not surprisingly, soon enough, the issue had become muddled. It could no longer be determined who said what and what was said and why.

MAPSSA recommends the holding of a dialogue wherein the mayor, opposers and all stakeholders are present to decide on the issue once and for all. Mayor Ateña, through his "Bubayin ang Maynila" movement, envisions a Manila that is green and nature-friendly like a forest park. This, the Winner Foundation will see and feel if only it talks face to face with him.

—ROMEO B. SANTOS,  
president, Manila Association of Public  
Secondary School Administrators,  
and principal, Torres High School

## Grateful to RP press

WHEN I filed a libel suit against a newspaper and two of its columnists, I frankly did not think that my complaint would merit more than routine notice in our press. My query to the Philippine Press Council whether "there is in our press community a corner or sanctuary to which one can repair for vindication or relief" was more despairing than hopeful. I did not believe the council would sanction one of its own.

The PCC found itself divided on the issue and could not act. But then something unexpected happened. A segment of our press community—composed of council members, columnists, journalists and media watchdogs—saw my case as no ordinary libel complaint, but as a landmark action with grave implications for the press itself.

From their writings, this is what we find:

1. On the right of reply to a news subject, there is wide-ranging consensus that it must be accorded by the offending publication. Some warned that our press must adopt the right of reply as policy and practice because the alternative is to make it a statutory right, which is the case in Germany, Brazil, South Africa and other countries.

2. On the limits of fair comment, several columnists challenged the widely held belief among newspaper columnists that they are not required to back their opinion with facts. One columnist opined, "Opinion without visible means of support is journalistic vagrancy."

3. On the abuse of press freedom, one columnist noted "The Romulo case mirrors cases ... where practitioners abuse citizens for various, often personal, partisan and narrow motives."

4. On ethics and values in journalism, there was considerable agreement that the press as an institution must jealously guard its own code of ethics. Otherwise it would just be "an institutional fraternity that is no better than Congress, the military and the police, incapable of making its members toe the line or conform with its own rules."

My complaint also triggered the discussion of related issues. When the Makati Business Club raised an eyebrow about the spectacle of a public relations practitioner doubling as a columnist, the personage alluded to replied lamely that he was just exercising his constitutional right to express his opinion. One columnist remarked that this would have been "unthinkable" for the giants who laid the foundations of Philippine journalism.

It is true that in order to answer the attacks against me, I had to repeat all the original slurs against me. Yet by taking action against the campaign of vilification against me and raising it to the attention of press watchdogs, my plight and concerns have received serious attention. More importantly, the press has started a debate about where its values truly lie.

It is more than one victim of abusive journalism could legitimately hope for. And for this, I am forever indebted to the Philippine press.

—ROBERTO R. ROMULO

## Forgotten, flood-prone Sampaloc district?

I WISH to call the attention of the offices and authorities concerned to the need for a better drainage system along the whole stretch of Maceda Street, Sampaloc, Manila.

Recently, Windsor Inn had several guests from Europe, North America and Asia who could not even go on a sight-seeing tour near our area because of the flooded surrounding streets. Needless to say, they were disappointed and don't want to come back to the Philippines because of their bad experience.

Why is the government neglecting this area of Sampaloc, a historic part of Manila, where thousands of students come and go day after day? This is near Dangwa, the country's biggest fresh flower market and the lecture capital of the metropolis.

Why is it that the fancy places where our politicians reside like Ayala Alabang and the posh sections of Makati and Quezon City are not flooded?

It is already the 21st century, we do not expect modern subways or great highways in our metropolis, but please let's solve the perennial problem of flooding in Sampaloc.

—JANET CACHO,  
supervisor, Windsor Inn,  
1478 A. Maceda St.,  
Sampaloc, Manila

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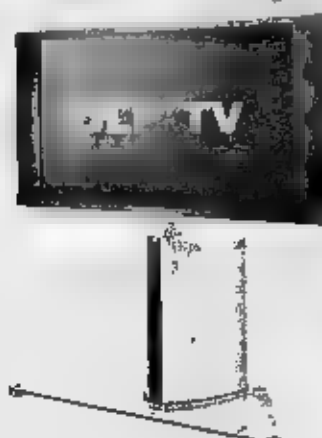
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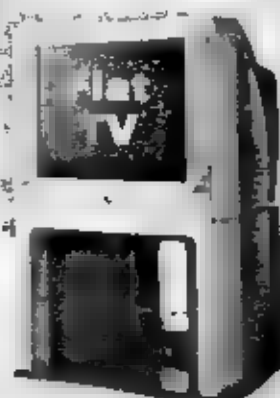
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**INQUIRER** *Southern Luzon*Editor Jan Sanday  
Bureau Chief Florio G. Salinas**Planned hotel on tiny sandbar opposed**By Julie R. Tancin  
Puerto Princesa City

**M**YINA Rosco, a small fishing community, stood defiantly in front of environment officials and several businessmen to prove her point that a hotel should not be constructed on a fragile sandbar off Puerto Princesa City.

Rosco, president of the Honda Bay Boatmen's Association Inc. (Hobai) and member of the

PLANNING/AN

Small island Rosco is ecotourism



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## Divino Rostro: The other icon in Peñafrancia festival

By Alan Peñayo  
Naga City

**T**HE GRANDEST Marian festival in the country originally drew its vitality from the unique Bicolano piety which centers on the devotion to the Nuestra Señora de Peñafrancia (Our Lady of Peñafrancia).

But for some 200 years since the devotion was started in 1690, religiosity has been overwhelmed by a spiritual matriarchy, with the more virile, masculine figure of spiritual power receding into the background.

In his paper, Bicolano historian Danilo M. Gerona said tales of miraculous healings and rescue from accidents, calamities and other injurious circumstances were attributed to the intercession of the Virgin of Peñafrancia.

"But events in the late nineteenth century Kabikolan opened a new devotional path for the Bikolanos which further added color and solemnity to the feast with the devotion to the Divino Rostro," he said.

Gerona, a specialist in the history of the early Spanish colonial years in Bicol, noted that accounts of the Peñafrancia procession never mentioned what was now regarded as the other important icon, the image of the Divino Rostro (Spanish for "Holy Face"), which became a feature of the event during the last few years of the Spanish regime.

### Father de la Torre

Its devotion to the Bikolanos, according to Gerona, was introduced by a Spanish secular priest assigned in Nueva Caceres (now Naga City), Licenciado Don Pedro de la Torre y del Pozo, who became famous in Bicol history as Fr. Pedro de la Torre.

"Fr. Pedro de la Torre was the provisor of the diocese during the incumbency of Bishop (Casimiro) Herrero. He was from the town of Osa de la Vega in the Diocese of Cuenca in Spain, the place where this devotion originated," said the former seminarian-historian.

He said the chapel of the parish of

Osa de la Vega was one of the most significant pilgrimage sites in the Diocese of Cuenca because of a copy of the handkerchief of St. Veronica, on which the image of the Holy Face was supposedly imprinted. The original was believed to have been deposited as an invaluable sacred relic in Rome, he said.

"This image in Osa de la Vega was inherited by Isabel del Corral Matilla, wife of Gregorio de la Torre, from her priest-cousin named Don Juan Matilla. It is not known, however, whether Fr. Pedro de la Torre was in any way related to Gregorio de la Torre," he added.

### Deep reverence

Gerona said the inhabitants' profound reverence showed the importance they attached to this image. A curtain was placed in front of its altar and could not be lifted by anyone, except priests who must don the prescribed sacerdotal garb, such as the sobrepellico and the stole, and only after having lighted two candles on the altar, he said.

Anyone who opened the curtain without the prescribed ritual faced excommunication, he said.

"The image caused enormous wonder when it was reported as having perspired blood and water three times in the presence of a crowd. Many of them who allegedly witnessed these miracles executed formal testimonies. It was even said that some maternal evidence were preserved and these were kept in the sacristy of the chapel where the bishop used to bless the crowd whenever he made his Episcopal visitation to his parish," Gerona said.

### Priests' vow

Many miracles were attributed to the image, but the inhabitants regarded as the greatest when the town was spared from the ravages of a series of cholera morbo epidemic that struck the town in 1834, 1854, 1855 and 1865, he said.

Remarkably, they claimed, nobody was afflicted even as the other towns suffered enormous numbers of casualties, said Gerona.

"Since then, the fame of this miraculous image spread, and one of those who have developed a strong devotion to the image was Don Pedro de la Torre," he said.

Upon Don Pedro's assignment to the Diocese of Caceres, Gerona said, a copy was made for the Cathedral of Nueva Caceres from the picture that he possessed from the image in Cuenca.

In the morning of Aug. 26, 1882, upon hearing the news that the cholera morbo had already reached Manila, Bishop Herrero, in his desire to seek divine assistance in sparing the city from this dreaded epidemic, ordered that the image of Peñafrancia be brought to the cathedral, Gerona said.

"The order was promptly complied with that same morning. But the provisor, Father De la Torre, who fervently wished to promote the devotion to the image, asked the bishop to include the Divino Rostro which was also placed on the altar of the cathedral," he said.

When the epidemic reached Nueva Caceres, Gerona said the priests made a vow that if it subsided its feast day, the Sunday after the birth of Mary, would be regularly celebrated in the diocese. This covenant was written on a *seña tercera* signed by the clergy and by the bishop and placed on the image, he said.

"It was said that God heard the petition of the priests and the epidemic quickly subsided," he said.

### Covenant papers

Complying with the vow, Gerona said, a procession was held from the patio of the cathedral during the feast day, with the signatories bearing the image on their shoulders. He said the covenant papers, together with the collected alms, were sent to Osa de la Vega.

When the image of the Peñafrancia was brought back to the shrine in the barrio of Francia on Sept. 29, the Holy Face was also brought along, he said.

The image, which was 61 centimeters high and 47 cm wide, that was framed by Marco Dorado had already been donated and was placed in the altar of the shrine, according to Gerona.

Every Friday, a novena was held in its honor, while the Sunday after the birth of Mary was celebrated as its feast day simultaneously with that in Osa de la Vega.

Since then, Gerona said, the image of the Divino Rostro had become the other main feature of the Peñafrancia festivities.

## Planned hotel . . .

From page A17

City Tourism Council (CTC), has been among those opposing the application of Ana Marie Asis and Juan Miguel Lagdameo for a special permit to construct a "world-class" resort hotel on Snake Island.

The tiny sandbar lies in the middle of the Honda Bay, along with several islands, including Arceff, where the Dos Palmas Arceff Island Resort is situated.

Rosco was among those who spoke in behalf of her community during a public hearing conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Sept. 8 on the issuance of a Special Land Use Permit (SLUP) to build a resort on the island. Asis and Lagdameo, both Manila-based businessmen, applied for the permit on May 10.

Rosco said the privatization of the island would greatly affect them since their livelihood depended on tourists visiting Honda Bay, particularly Snake.

She read a letter from the DENR denying the CTC's request last year to become a partner of the agency to protect, clean and conserve the island. The department then reasoned that it had a plan to proclaim the island a seascape and landscape protected area with maximum interest for all stakeholders.

"In effect, you are abandoning your plan to make this island a protected area because of the proposal of these businessmen," Rosco said in Filipino.

### Like the way it is

She stressed that even tourists who came to the island didn't want to convert it into a resort. "We like it the way it is, without buildings because when you start putting structures, it will be like other resorts," she quoted the guests as saying.

Snake is the only remaining public island in the city where tourists and local residents can bask in the sun, swim, snorkel and feed fish for free. Its surrounding coral reefs serve as breeding ground for small fish.

The island shelters fishermen during windy and rainy days. It also serves as a natural tide-breaker in Honda Bay.

During the public hearing, a master plan to put up a Mediterranean style one-story hotel and a swimming pool on the island was presented by representatives of Lagdameo and Asis—Juliana Urquiza and Warren Shaw, and their lawyer, Thomas Miguel Timbancaya.

Shaw said the building would comply with DENR specifications and other environmental standards.

Urquiza, one of the designers,

added that buildings on stilts would be put up and the existing mangroves would be preserved.

### Waste disposal

Five septic tanks will contain waste from the buildings, she said. "Before the waste from the septic tanks goes out to the water, it will be clean and safe," she said, adding that they would see to it that they would comply with the requirements.

"We don't want another Boracay," said Cleofe Bernardino, executive director of the Palawan NGO Networks Inc. (PNNI).

In its position paper, the PNNI, along with the Harbor Foundation and the Environmental Legal Assistance Center, noted that Snake was believed to be an oceanic formation and geologically young, which means that the ecosystem of the island was very fragile.

Any development plans should conform with the island's ecosystem, as well as its carrying capacity, the groups said. In fact, they argued, Snake could not be considered an island at all because it was very thin and had no considerable land mass. Only about 400 square meters of tide were not submerged during high tide.

Officials of the DENR-48 (Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan) and the proponents said the environmental consultants would take care of the mitigating measures as far as marine life was concerned. The buildings, they said, would be constructed in such a way as that they would not adversely affect the environment.

The critics noted that under Proclamation No. 219, which was issued on July 2, 1967, the whole of Palawan was declared a national reserve closed to exploitation.

Its status as a game refuge and bird sanctuary was clarified through an endorsement from the Office of the President on Feb. 9, 1970, which said that "all area of less than 50,000 hectares should fall within the prohibition of Proclamation 219."

### Palawan, not Snake

With its small size, Snake Island falls under this category, but the DENR and the proponents argued that the proclamation covers the whole province and was not specific to the island.

Although under Philippine law, islands should not be titled because they are public and state-owned, real property records in the neighboring Barangay Manalo showed that Asis owned two islands in Honda Bay. Other islands, such as Cowrie, Arceff, Pan-

dan, Meara Marina and Starfish, are already owned by some individuals or companies by virtue of SLUPs and other tenurial instruments.

Under Proclamation No. 2152, which declared that, as a mangrove and wildlife habitat, the entire province, mangrove forest and Snake Island must be withdrawn from entry, sale, settlement and other forms and disposition.

The DENR and the proponents said the Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan, a special law created for the environmental zoning of the province, would determine the best uses of Honda Bay.

But the NGOs said it was also the DENR that issued Administrative Order No. 8 in 1987, which stated that "pursuant to Forestry Law and Proclamation 2152, the application for licenses, leases or permits of any kind involving mangrove swamp forest reserves, whether such applications are new, renewal or extension, shall not be entertained and/or processed."

### Hagedorn

Mayor Edward Hagedorn said the construction of a hotel on the island would attract more tourists. He did not pose any objection to the project "as long as it conforms to environmental standards."

"For the protection of the environment, we have sacrificed so many industries already," Hagedorn said. Because the national government is cash-strapped, the local government should make its own money and the Snake project is one solution, he said.

"If the violation is not so gross, we should not be too strict," Hagedorn said, arguing that tourism was the city's only source of income.

Opponents, however, said they were not totally against any tourism-related development of the city since it was being promoted as a tourist destination. They said they did not agree with the location of the proposed hotel because the island they pointed out, was very delicate and not capable of holding the structures and activities.

Rep. Abraham M. Ara, chair of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, said he did not want a hotel on the island for environmental and personal reasons.

As a young boy, he said his father, the late former Speaker Ramon V. Mitra, used to bring him to the island and it had a special place in his heart. If the majority of residents and stakeholders are against it, he will likely move for the disapproval of the project, he said.



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# Across the NATION

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FISHING

It's a slow day for this fisherman at the Sta. Ana Wharf in Davao City who whiles away his time sitting by the side of his boat.

## Rescue of 4 RP women in Sabah brothel fails

By Carla P. Gomez  
PDI Visayas Bureau

**BACOLOD CITY**—The Malaysian police on Monday night attempted to rescue four Negrense women who were forced to work in a brothel in Sabah.

But the women reportedly refused to go with their rescuers because they were happy with where they were, said Rep. Ignacio Arroyo Jr. (Negros Occidental, 5th district).

He said he learned about the raid from Mariano Roque, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) administrator.

"It is very possible that the women have been threatened and are afraid to be rescued," said Arroyo.

Another possibility, said the congressman, was that only one of the four Negrense women wanted to be taken out of the karaoke bar that allegedly doubled as a brothel.

Most likely, he added, it was the one who sent a text message to Vice Gov. Isidro Zayco that they

were duped by their agent and then sold to a prostitution house in Malaysia.

### Coercion

If this was the case, Arroyo said the three others would be asked to sign an affidavit that they were staying there on their own free will.

Zayco brought to the congressman's attention the plight of these four women apparently because they were from the towns of Hinigaran, Himamaylan, Cauayan and Candiani, which belong to the fifth district.

Based on the text message received by the vice governor, the women were allegedly sold into prostitution and could not escape because the people who had custody of them hid them.

The same woman who had sought Zayco's help had also informed Radyo Agong of her plight.

Arroyo said Malaysian police planned to stage another raid because they did not have the names of the four Negrense women.

## Garcias file P50-M libel suit vs John O

By Jolene R. Bulambot  
PDI Visayas Bureau

**CEBU CITY**—Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia and her father, former Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia, yesterday filed a P50-million damage suit against former Sen. John Osmena for accusing them of using Capitol coffers to fund her campaign for governor in the last elections.

Pablo John Garcia, brother and legal counsel of Gwendolyn, filed the civil case at the regional trial court in Barili town, about 60 km southwest of this city.

The Garcias asked for P40 mil-

lion in moral damages, P9 million in exemplary damages and P1 million in lawyer's fees.

Osmena, in a statement, said the case would give "every one the opportunity for a preview of the plunder case now under in-

vestigation by the Ombudsman."

He said the P600,000 filing fee was not a "small amount one casually throws away" on a complaint, which he said would not prosper.

"The Garcias are either desperate to divert public attention away from the graft investigation or are just simply awash with excess cash," the former senator said.

### Plunder

The case followed Osmena's

allegation that Pablo Garcia, during his term as governor, used P1 billion in provincial funds to finance Gwendolyn's campaign for governor.

He said the illegal disbursement of funds "bankrupted" the province.

He called a press conference last Sept. 12 where he first hurled the accusations. The next day, he wrote the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas and asked that the Garcias be investigated for plunder and graft.

Osmena also asked that provincial engineer Peter Madera, provincial budget officer Eduardo Habin, provincial accountant Maneto Ypi, and provincial treasurer Roy Salubre be included in the investigation for allegedly conniving with the Garcias.

Ombudsman Director Virginia Palanca Santiago said the Ombudsman would investigate because the letter had no supporting documents.

In an eight-page complaint, the Garcias said Osmena

"falsely and baselessly accused us of having conspired to amass, accumulate or acquire ill-gotten wealth through misappropriation, conversion, misuse or malversation of public funds or raids in the public treasury."

They attached to the complaint a Commission on Audit report saying that Cebu province had P4.8 billion worth of net assets and ranked first among 79 provinces in terms of net assets and total income for 2003.

## Report says Bohol inmates had duplicate keys to cell

By Chito A. Fuentes  
PDI Visayas Bureau

**TAGBILARAN CITY** Two of the three prisoners who escaped from the Bohol Detention and Rehabilitation Center (BDRC) had duplicate keys to their prison cells.

This was one of the findings of the provincial board committee on peace and order that looked into the escape of three prisoners from the BDRC last Aug. 29.

According to the committee re-

port, which was presented in Monday's session, inmate Reynaldo Avergonzado told investigators that escapees Virgilio Poyas and Romeo Duterte "had a duplicate key for prison cell no. 23."

Avergonzado reportedly said the BDRC guards usually entrusted the prison keys to "certain favored detainees."

Virgilio and Duterte were cellmates of Avergonzado in cell no. 23. Poyas' brother Diosdado was in cell B.

Bohol Gov. Erico Amtenrado had issued a shoot-to-kill order against the Poyas brothers and Duterte who continued to elude authorities since they bolted jail last Aug. 29.

The Poyas brothers are facing robbery with murder case while Duterte is charged with rape. The escapees were suspected by the police to be behind last week's robbery of a barangay councilman in Sagbayan town.

The committee report said the three escaped through the pig-

gery, which was located near post no. 4. It did not say, however, who owned the piggery.

The report, however, noted that no jail guard was manning the post because of the four-order emitted by the piggery.

Among others, the committee recommended that BDRC warden Anthony Apale be placed under preventive suspension "to have effective and swift implementation of the changes as corrective measures."

### ROUNDUP

#### Cityhood bill re-filed

**ILAGAN** Isabela—Rep. Rodolfo Albano III has re-filed the bill converting this capital town into a component city of the province. House Bill 5512, the Ilagan cityhood bill, was authored by former Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano Jr. Albano's father. The Senate failed to tackle the bill last year after it was sidetracked by committee hearings on the Jose Pidal controversy, the younger Albano said. He said Isabela Representatives Edwin Jy (second district), Faustino Dy (third district) and Anthony Miranda (fourth district) were his co-authors in the new bill. Ilagan Mayor Defintio Albano said Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, chair of the Senate committee on local government, has promised to sponsor a counterpart bill on Ilagan's cityhood bid. Residents in 1998 junked the conversion of the town into a component city. *Vilmarie Vizaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

#### 2 escapees captured in Cebu

**CEBU CITY**—Two escapees from Toboso town, Negros Occidental were separately captured on Tuesday on Mactan Island, Cebu. Jonathan Mahinay, 28, who was facing a rape case, was collared in Barangay Ibabao, Cordova town. Jason Villarito, 18, who was charged with robbery, was arrested in Barangay Babag 2, Lapulapu City. The operation was jointly conducted by the Police Mobile Group of Negros Occidental and the Lapulapu police's Special Weapons and Tactics Team. Insp. Romeo Sultan Layta, Toboso police chief, said the manhunt for the two escapees reached Cebu after receiving information that they were hiding here, apparently because Mahinay's wife is from Cebu. Mahinay and Villarito were among the six inmates who bolted the Toboso police station on July 1 when most policemen were busy securing the plaza due to the town's founding anniversary celebration. *Jhunmar Napalacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

#### P30M in fake cigarettes seized

**SUBIC BAY FREEPORT**—Officials of the Bureau of Customs on Monday destroyed P30 million worth of confiscated fake cigarettes as part of the intensified campaign against smuggling and other illegal activities inside the freeport. Using a mobile shredder, at least 845 boxes of fake 555 Filter King and Marlboro cigarettes from China were crushed to prevent them from reaching the local market. Lawyer Reynaldo Avelino, deputy collector for operations in Subic, said 245 boxes of fake 555 Filter King cigarettes and 599 boxes of fake Marlboro cigarettes were consigned to Goldlink International (Subic) Inc., an accredited investor here. Records showed that in June 2004, a 20-foot container van arrived here from China via Vietnam. Customs investigators and inspectors seized the container van after they found out that it was loaded with fake branded cigarettes. *Alan Macalado, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

## US general's visit to GenSan linked to hunt for Abu

**GENERAL SANTOS CITY** A ranking US military official made a clandestine visit here yesterday reportedly to check into the operations against Abu Sayyaf bandits in South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat.

A source from the military's intelligence community said Maj. Gen. Gary North, operations director of the US Pacific Command, arrived aboard a private plane at around 2 p.m. He met with local military officials.

On Saturday, North was in Zamboanga City where he met with Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Generoso Senga. He also visited American soldiers training their Filipino counterparts in that city.

There are no joint military exercises being conducted in General Santos.

The military intelligence source, who asked not to be identified, told the *Inquirer* that North's visit had something to do with the ongoing manhunt against Abu Sayyaf bandits led by Isnilon Hapson.

Hapson's group has reportedly joined forces with the local bandit group Abu Sufia.

Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffy Janjalani and more than 50 of his followers landed on the shore of Palimbang town in Sultan Kudarat sometime in July last year. The military immediately launched a manhunt operation against

the group but through the help of the Abu Sufia, Janjalani managed to sneak out of Palimbang.

Last week, the military bombarded the bandits' lair in Barangay Serapunang in Bagumbayan town, Sultan Kudarat, but the bandits were able to escape with the help of the local armed group in the area. They fled toward Senator Ninoy Aquino town in Sultan Kudarat where they reportedly used as human shields civilian residents of hunterland village Babuan to thwart continuing military assault.

The bandits reportedly robbed local residents in the area of their valuables and personal belongings.

Aside from getting updates on

the military's manhunt operation against Hapson, the same military intelligence source said North was here to confer with local military officials regarding the alleged presence of several Jemaah Islamiyah members in Central Mindanao.

The *Inquirer* source said there are "several JM members in Central Mindanao. But what we have are mere names, no photographs."

But Col. Alfredo Cayton, commander of the Army's 601st Infantry Brigade, said North's arrival here was "more of an administrative visit." *Aquiles Z. Zonia with reports from Charlie C. Sefiase and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

## Pesticide use seen cause of ozone depletion

By Donna Demetillo  
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

**BAGUIO CITY**—Benguet and this mountain resort city are known for their luscious strawberries, but unknown to many, the production of this seasonal fruit contributes to the depletion of the ozone layer, which protects all life from the sun's harmful radiation.

Wilhemina Lagunilla, ozone desk officer of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau, cited this example to illustrate that the Cordillera remains a contributor

to ozone depletion because of its farmers' use of methyl bromide in pesticides for soil fumigation.

Methyl bromide in fumigants and quarantine applications, structural facilities, buildings and golf courses has 0.6 ozone depletion potential (ODP refers to the amount of ozone depletion caused by a substance).

Lagunilla said the metered dose inhaler used by asthmatic patients is the second ozone depleting substance (ODS) not yet addressed in the country.

ODS are man-made compounds containing chlorine and bromine,

particularly chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), halons and methyl bromide.

However, Lagunilla said the Philippine Ozone Desk (POD) has taken steps to regulate ODS products. She said the Bureau of Customs, in close coordination with the POD, has banned since 1998 the entry of freon in preparation to stopping its use for refrigerants and air conditioners, among other things.

Freon belongs to the family of CFCs. She said CFCs were once considered as "miracle compounds" when these were discovered in 1928. These were seemingly harmless to humans and the environment, inert,

stable, odorless, non-flammable, non-corrosive and non-toxic.

Lagunilla said in 2003, CFCs accounted for 89.86 of total ODS consumption in the country. CFCs are usually used as cooling agents in refrigerators, propellants in spray cans, aerosols, metered dose inhalers, solvents in computers and electronic circuits, and blowing agents for foam manufacturing and other industrial applications.

Rolando Reyes, chief of the pollution control division of the regional DENR-EMB, said the Cordillera is a "minimum contributor" using only 40-50 kg of CFCs a day.



**CLASSROOM DONATION** Members of Gaiashokyo (Foreign Entertainers and Promoters Association of Japan) led by Masashi Matsumura (second from right), businessmen led by Oscar Tan (fourth from left) pose at the inauguration of two classrooms at the Isabang Elementary School in Lucena City donated by the Gaiashokyo.



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# Bomb kills boy, hurts 20 in Rizal fiesta

By Luige A. del Puerto

A NIGHT of merriment ended in chaos and weeping shortly before midnight Tuesday in San Mateo, Rizal.

Barangay Dulong Bayan was celebrating the feast of St. Matthew when in the middle of the revelry, an improvised bomb exploded, wounding around 20 people and killing a 4-year-old boy.

Police officials said the explosion was so powerful, it was heard several kilometers away.

It also ripped through a steel accordion gate and the ceiling of the store outside of which the bomb exploded.

The bomb—believed to be a form of pillbox—could not have been detonated at a worse time. The feast in Dulong Bayan is known for attracting people.

Gen. Luna, a major road in the barangay, is so packed with people and stalls that authorities close it to vehicles.

That night was no different from previous fiesta celebrations.

The police identified the dead child

as John Paul Ramirez. He suffered from multiple wounds and burns.

His two siblings, Mark John, 7, and Jerry Mae, 2, were also injured in the blast. Their father, Christopher Andal, was seriously hurt as well.

The family, along with several other victims, seemed to have absorbed the full force of the blast since they were only about three meters away from the blast site, police and witnesses said.

The mother, Nelly Ramirez, said she told her family to wait for her be-

BOMB/A21



AN UNIDENTIFIED man sifts through debris left behind after an improvised bomb exploded during the fiesta at Dulong Bayan, San Mateo, Rizal, Tuesday night.

RONY HONILLADA

## OUTDOOR ADVERTISING ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

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### AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MMDA

20 September 2004

HONORABLE BAYANI "BF" FERNANDO  
Chairman  
Metropolitan Manila Development Authority  
EDSA, Makati City

Dear Hon. Chairman,

For and in behalf of the members of the Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines (the "OAAP") under the umbrella of the Advertising Board of the Philippines (ADBOARD), I lend your recent attempts to address the over-proliferation of billboards in major thoroughfares in Metro Manila. We likewise are alarmed with the mushrooming presence of illegal billboards, such as those along road rights of way.

First, we state for the record that OAAP members firmly believe in self-regulation, adhere to strict compliance with the law and its own OAAP Code of Ethics and have not located its billboards in such areas. The growing concern created by billboards was created by NON-OAAP member practitioners that precisely avoided or shunned OAAP membership to place their billboards wherever they want. Sadly, advertisers continue to patronize such billboards and help feed the problem further.

We do, however, caution you to proceed carefully on this matter by stating the following points:

1. The matter is first and foremost an issue of freedom of expression enshrined in our Constitution. Any attempt to regulate our industry constitutes prior restraint. Hence, we firmly adhere to a system of self-regulation to address this matter.
2. On the issue of content, we believe that the present system of self-regulation through the ADBOARD is still the most faithful to this constitutionally guaranteed freedom.
3. The issues of jurisdiction and enforcement have to be addressed by government in general and not just the MMDA. Under the present law, the DPWH has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over national road rights-of-way. The present system of multiple assumed jurisdictions of the local governments, the DPWH and the MMDA, however, contributes to the proliferation of illegal billboards rather than hinders it.
4. Finally, from its humble beginnings, outdoor advertising has grown into a multi-billion peso industry. Any regulation on our industry will surely impact on this nation's economy and will result in economic hardship to the Filipino citizens the industry employs.

Given the foregoing, we believe that we have the right to be heard in any matter that will affect our industry. Due process, after all, is another right guaranteed by our Constitution. Together, we can find to address all issues that beset the outdoor advertising industry.

Very truly yours,

*Hugo T. Perez, Jr.*  
HUGO T. PEREZ, JR.  
President

OUTDOOR ADVERTISING ASSOCIATION  
OF THE PHILIPPINES (OAAP)

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

## Makati turning heart-friendly

By Margaux C. Ortiz

RESTAURANTS and fast food chains in Makati City would soon have heart-friendly menus as a "healthy alternative," according to city officials.

Makati Health Officer Dr. Lourdes Salud said the city's health office would coordinate with restaurant owners to prepare a healthy menu on top of the greasy and salty foods they usually serve.

"For example, McDonalds or Jollibee could serve low-fat or fat-free foods aside from their usual menu, giving the customer a healthier choice," Salud said.

Salud added that they would be asking the city's 2,000 food stores to propose their healthy menus before the end of the year.

She said establishments that immediately comply with their campaign would be given a

"healthy heart sticker."

Aside from their local campaign, Salud said Makati City has pledged support for the Philippine Heart Association-Healthy Lifestyle Coalition's projects.

Among the PHA's projects is the "Mag-Healthy Lifestyle (Mag-Healthy) Tayo sa Resto," which also encourages food establishments to prepare healthy menus.

PHA Advocacy Committee Chair Dr. Efren Vicaldo said in a statement, "Business is business, but these food establishments should remember that serving healthy foods should be their business as well."

Vicaldo said the cities of Pasig, Mandaue, and Makati had already partnered with the PHA.

Salud noted that cardiovascular ailments caused the most deaths in Makati City for the last five years.

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## Mandaluyong bans smoking in City Hall

By Ruth L. Navarra

CHANGE begins in your own backyard.

The Mandaluyong City Hall wants to lead an example to the rest of the city by enforcing the smoking ban within its boundaries.

City Ordinance No. 279 S-2004, approved last April 2, dictates that smoking is strictly prohibited in enclosed offices of all government and public buildings, schools, hospitals and medical clinics and public transportation.

In a memorandum written by Ernesto Victorino, city administrator, all smokers caught within the City Hall compound will be fined P1,000, P2,000 and P3,000 for first, second and third offense, respectively.

Third-time offenders could also be jailed for three days but not more than six days, or both at the discretion of the court.

The memorandum also provided a list of smokers' areas, most of which are located in open spaces and parking lots within the City Hall compound.

City officials will be meeting with different drivers' associations, building administrators and mall owners because they plan to implement the ordinance in the whole city by next month.

### InoBox

Question  
of the  
Week

Some militant party-list representatives have protested the reduction of their pork barrel (from 35 million to 10 million pesos each) for the latter half of 2004. Is their protest valid? Why or why not?

Texters: Two messages R printed in Tuesday's InoBox will each receive a "Giyito stuffed toy!"

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# Passenger jumps off ferry Bomb kills boy ...

By Laila B. Salaverria

SEARCH and rescue operations are ongoing for a passenger who jumped off the SuperFerry 12 while the vessel was cruising off the Batangas coast on its way to Manila early yesterday morning.

The Philippine Coast Guard identified the passenger as Teodoro Jaena, 32, a native of Iloilo who allegedly was bothered with problems about his love life.

PCG spokesperson Lt. Armand Ballo said Delia Procalia, another ship passenger, said she saw Jaena walking along the ship's

economy deck at 5:30 a.m. yesterday, minutes before he jumped overboard.

At that time, the SuperFerry 12 was nearing Talim Island off Balayan, Batangas.

## Man overboard

Procalia said Jaena had quietly walked along the deck at the back of the ship for several minutes.

Then, Jaena asked her to hold his wallet and cell phone as he took off his slippers, Procalia added.

Before Procalia was able to stop him, Jaena had already

jumped off the ship.

Teams from the SuperFerry 12 were sent out to scour the area in search of Jaena. Crew members were still searching the waters late in the afternoon, but there was no sighting of Jaena.

Later, the crew sought the help of the PCG, who in turn sent rescue teams from its Nasugbu detachment to the area.

SuperFerry 12 Captain Jose Yap said he had learned that Jaena was reportedly bothered by the fact that his girlfriend was supposed to be married to another man.

From page A28

side the road as she went off to buy food.

They were going home after that.

"I left them there. Moments later, I heard an explosion but I did not mind it," Nelly narrated inside the Amang Rodriguez Medical Center in Marikina City, where most of the blast victims were rushed.

"I continued walking, and I bought some food. When I came back, it was chaotic. I saw bloodied people," she said.

Nelly sensed something was terribly wrong.

She looked for her family, and found her husband carrying the children to a tricycle. They were bloodied.

John Paul died while undergoing treatment at the ARMC.

A witness told the police that he saw a ball, less the size of a volleyball, thrown in the air. As he turned to see where it landed, it exploded, releasing nails and other metal shrapnel.

However, the witness did not see who threw the ball.

"It was a really huge pillbox," said PO2 Cruz. After the incident, the police gathered nails from the site. As well as suffering from burns, many of the blast victims were pierced by nails.

The police have not yet deter-

mined the motive nor the culprit in the bombing.

Sr. Supt. Leocadio Santiago, Rizal Police chief, initially said travelling vendors or "tianggeros" might have carried the explosive device for self-defense.

It might have exploded because of mishandling.

But another angle has developed hours after the incident. This angle points to a frat war as

the cause of the melee, according to Santiago.

"There is another angle. We received solicited information that there is a frat war in the area. They're just kids, maybe just high school students," Santiago said.

"We are trying to determine which of the two is it," he said.

The police have so far ruled out politics or religious fanaticism as possible motives.

## GSIS made cash cow by siblings

WINSTON Garcia, president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), and his sister, Carolyn G. Empemano, probably think that the government-owned firm is their cash cow.

According to Iloilo Rep. Rolox Suplico, the two incurred P5.25 million in unliquidated advances in 10 months in 2001.

Suplico has documents to support his allegation.

If what Suplico says is true, ang kakapal naman ng mukha ng magkapatid na ito.

Until the fat salaries and allowances of officials of government owned and controlled corporations were exposed, Garcia was receiving P356,979 a month. His sister Carolyn was receiving P98,767 salary plus P31,101.64 in allowances.

These siblings could afford to receive fat salaries and allowances, while other ordinary government officials and employees receive starvation pay.

The word "immoral" is not in the vocabulary of Winston and Carolyn.

## ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



riqueta Disuanco defended Garcia and Empemano.

Disuanco said, "There is nothing wrong or irregular for heads of government agencies and corporations to make cash advances because these are normal financial activities, as long as these advances are properly liquidated in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Commission on Audit."

Disuanco probably also makes cash advances although she already has fat salaries and allowances.

Ma'am, if what Garcia and his sister did was not irregular, then it certainly was immoral. Immoral because they wallow in wealth in the midst of extreme poverty among other government people.

andro Mendoza warns drug testing centers against making fraudulent findings for drivers found positive for drug use.

The penalty for such an illegal act is revocation of the accreditation of the drug testing center, Mendoza says.

Mendoza should take a long, hard look at the following drug test centers: MQR, My Chauffeur, Drug Check, Sure Check, One Step, Speed, Pharma CT and Halib-Laceda.

The operators of the above-named centers reportedly are opposing the transfer of the Southern Licensing Office of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) from the Unwise Coastal Mall.

A government licensing office such as the LTO-South should be insulated from the crowd for it to operate efficiently. Coastal Mall is visited by thousands every day. Most of them are there to shop and not to apply for a driver's license.

Fixers abound at LTO-South because security guards have no control over the crowd and can't tell applicants for driver's license from shoppers.

## Tolosa 'fiesta'

TOLOSANOS Inc., the association of Metro Manila residents from Tolosa, Leyte, will honor the town's patron saint, St. Michael the Archangel, in a "fiesta reunion" to be held on Sept. 25, 2004 at Sta. Rita College Orphanage Auditorium, Dr. A. Santos Avenue, Sucar, Parañaque. A High Mass will kick off the celebration at 10 a.m.

Registration will start at 8 a.m. This year's hermano mayor is James Bernard Dalupetit.

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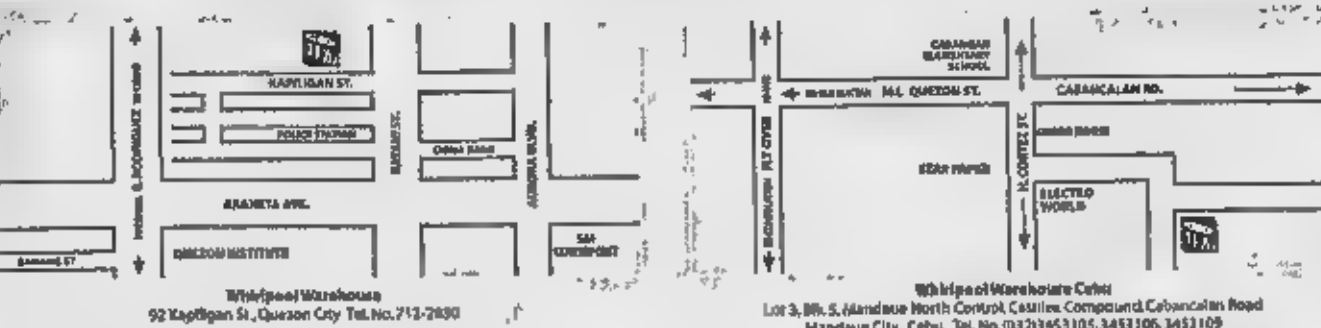
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## SPORTS

## CEU's tough job of halting UM begins

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CENTRO Escolar University wants to topple University of Manila from its lofty place in collegiate basketball history.

Whether the CEU Scorpions have what it takes to do that will be known today when they clash with the Hawks at the start of their National Athletics Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities title series at the Rizal Coliseum.

The best-of-three showdown is set at 1 p.m., after the junior and women's championship battles in the morning.

## GAMES TODAY

(Rizal Coliseum)

9 a.m.—UM vs SL

Clare (Jrs)

11 a.m.—CEU vs AMA

(Women)

1 p.m.—UM vs CEU

(Srs, Game 1)

The UM Baby Hawks, who are bidding for their third straight crown, and the St. Clare College of Caloocan Baby Saints clash for the junior title at 9 a.m., while the Lady Scorpions and AMA Computer University

Lady Titans dispute the women's title at 11. UM president Ernesto delos Santos said the Hawks, whose streak of 72 wins in the league is a

record in collegiate play, will try to sweep the championship for the fourth straight year.

The Hawks, also three-time intercollegiate champs, have so far won 18 games this season.

"This is going to be an exciting finals because if there is one team that is capable of stopping UM this year, it is CEU," said Naasou president Dr. Ernest Jay Adaleon of SCC.

The Hawks will draw firepower from Jovit Gomez and Ryan Regalado, who are averaging 19 and 16 points per game, respectively.

The Scorpions will rely on top scorer June Macasae, Almer Cristobal and Dexter Canillo.

## SPORTSWATCH

## Top amateurs sign up for Riviera golf tilt

THE RIVIERA Amateur golf championship gets underway Sept. 28 with some of the country's top players in the ranks expected to vie for top honors in various divisions at Riviera's Couples and Langer courses in Silang, Cavite. Juvic Pagunsan, Marvin Durand, Jay Bayron, Kim Chang Hoi and Raymond Sangil have signed their intention to play in the Championship division, spread over four days at the par-71 hazard-laden Langer course. Registration is ongoing with tournament fee pegged at P2,000 (P1,500 for Riviera members). The Championship field of this event, sponsored by Pacsports and DHL, is limited to 30 players with a separate 36-hole Championship II division set for 20 players on Sept. 30-Oct. 1. Other 36-hole events on tap are the divisions A (handicaps 4.8-9), B (9.1-15), both at Langer, and C (15.1-21.1) at Couples. Senior players will have two categories with those aged 55-64 set to play Sept. 30-Oct. 1 at Langer and those aged 65-and-above slated to vie for honors Sept. 29 and Oct. 1 at Couples.

## King of the Road registration

REGISTRATION for the 8th Annual adidas King of the Road race slated for October 3 and is now ongoing at the ground floor of the Vasquez Madrigal Plaza Bldg. at 51 Annapolis St. in San Juan. Registration fee is P200 inclusive of an adidas running singlet and a ticket to the carbo loading night on October 1 at the adidas Sports Kamp at the Bonifacio Global City in Taguig. Registration hours is 8:30 to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Saturday and 9:00 a.m. up to 12 noon on Sunday. Deadline for submission of entries is on September 29. The race is co-presented by Globe Genetec, and backed by McDonalds, Snickers chocolate bar, adidas watches, Powerade, Viva Mineral water, adidas fragrances, Paintball Empire and MJO.

## Altamirano to aid aspiring varsity players

PBA Eric Altamirano is holding the Coach E basketball school with the aim of helping out aspiring varsity players through a sound training program that focuses thoroughly on fundamentals, shot training and position specific aspects of the game. Despite numerous requests from parents and students to add more classes to its present schedules at the adidas Sports Kamp in Fort Bonifacio Global City, Reyes Gym in Mandaluyong and Club 650 in Libis, Altamirano said only limited slots are open to ensure personalized attention. The next sessions for beginners, intermediate and advance classes are every Monday starting Sept. 27 for fundamentals and shot training (adidas Sports Kamp, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.). Other classes are Fridays (Club 650 Libis, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.) and Saturdays (Reyes Gym, 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.). Interested parties may call 8842778 to 88 local 41-42 or 09189293129 or e-mail at iba\_phil@yahoo.com.

## Powerlifting interschool tourney slated

THE POWERLIFTING Association of the Philippines will hold its fourth interschool championships on Sept. 25-26 at the activity area of Robinson's Place, Manila. The event is open to men and women 14 to 24 years old who are currently enrolled in a school or university. Competition will be conducted in the squat, bench press and dead lift events. Francisco J. Elizalde, HOC representative to the Philippines, will grace the opening ceremony at 11:30 a.m. on Sept. 25. The event is supported by Robinson's Malls, Pagcor, Store Shop/Blazing Products, Designer Whey/Sports Nutrition, Jollibee, Nestle 0% Fat Ice Cream, Golden Vhine Laboratories, Pro Gym and Chase Technologies.

## FIBL launches Ambassador's Cup

THE FILIPINO-INDIAN Basketball League (FIBL) now on its 5th year opens its 2004 season this weekend in Makati. The tournament is dubbed as The Ambassador's Cup in honor of the Indian Ambassador to the Philippines, Her Excellency Navreet Sharma, who will be hosting a cocktail opening of the league at her North Forbes residence this Saturday afternoon. Expected to grace the FIBL cocktail opening are special invited guests Makati Mayor Tringon, PBA Commissioner Noli Tala and PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad. Hardcourt action in the FIBL, sponsored this year by Globe Platinum, Honda Cars-Calocan, and Mofen as the official ball, starts on Sunday, Sept. 26 at the Makati Coliseum with former champions Knights going up against the Mike Advan-led Kings at 2:30 p.m., followed by the match featuring defending champions Bombay Bombers against Blue Sharks.

## Jiao, Araneta rule NCA derby

BREEDER Boy Jiao of Rizal and Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta stretched their winning run to clinch the championship of the National Cookers Association (NCA) 7-Stag Derby Monday night at the Araneta Coliseum. Jiao and Araneta have won two hard-earned championships so far. They also topped the first leg on Aug. 31 and Sept. 2. Rep. Gerry Espina shared the limelight by emerging as co-champion. The next NCA 7-Stag Derby unfolds on Oct. 5 and 7 with NCA president Ilo Ynares, former DILG Undersecretary Jun Santiago and Jiao as hosts. Ynares said that only those points earned in NCA-sanctioned stag derbies will be the basis in choosing the Stagfighter winner.

## LGBA 7-Stag series fires off

THE FIRST set of 7 stag derbies of the Luzon Gamefowl Breeders Association kicks off at Roligon Mega Cockpit on Saturday, September 25. The action then shifts to Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City on Sept. 27 for the second round of eliminations and the championship on the 29th. In full support of this 3-day competition are Vitarich Corp., Laque Drug, Excellence Gamefowl Specialists' Robichem Laboratories, Thunderbird and Asvet. For more details and reservation of cockhouses, call 9267808 / 9245072, 9245051 loc. 128 or thru 09205851940.

## ASIAN UNDER-14 TENNIS

## Balce reaches q'finals

MARK Balce downed Kenneth Abadia, 7-6 (6), 6-2, yesterday to reach the boys' singles quarterfinals of the Futures Foundation-Asian Tennis Federation (ATF) 14-under Series at the Ynares Sports Center in Pasig City.

Balce, a seventh grader at the Ateneo, forged a showdown with compatriot Francis Casey Alcantara of Cagayan de Oro, who scored a 6-2, 6-2 victory over Malaysian Zhu Hwa Chong.

Top seed Pablo Olivarez downed Malaysian Mark Pee Kwang Xin, 6-4, 6-0, to advance against compatriot Jose Emmanuel Narvaez, a 7-5, 6-1 winner over compatriot Alko Hani Ong Sy.

Second seed El Santo Santos outclassed Malaysian Han Zhou Tan, 6-1, 6-1, to set up a duel with Cebuano James Carl Canete, who overpowered Myanmar's Kyaw Naung Aung, 6-3, 6-1.

In other matches, John Franc Gil Largo won over Joshua Tan Ho, 6-4, 6-1, and Tomas Apacible prevailed over Roman Floreza, 6-3, 6-3.



QUICK SPIN: Ivan Isada of Team Honda locks up dirt as he takes a curve masterfully in his Honda Civic Vtec en route to victory in the RP-13 class of the National Rallycross Series last Saturday at the Lirwang Ipil-Ipil in Pasay City. The race was part of the fifth leg of the 2004 circuit.

In the girls' singles, top-ranked Malaysian Jawariah Nordin blanked the Philippines' Martina Rivero, 6-0, 6-0, to advance against Filipina Zhane Quitana, a 6-0, 6-1 winner over Myanmar's Khaine Nyee.

Also advancing was third seed Jessica Agra, who clobbered Julie En Boror, 6-0, 6-2. Agra will meet the winner between fifth seed Vithinatha Chellipriya of Malaysia and Filipina Anne Christine Parramonio.

Other locals seeing action in this weeklong event sponsored by the Australian Open are second seed Trudy Gine Amoranto, Ma. Regina Sannago, Sarah Jane Lam, Victoria Magaway and Noelle Nikk Zoleta.

## Dolphins bag first NC crown

From page A23

By Jasmine W. Payo

TEN minutes from the final buzzer the Philippine Christian U Dolphins were already whooping it up.

The Dolphins delivered the best first half they could play and just stayed fabulous as they swept the University of Perpetual Almas, 72-60, at the Araneta Coliseum yesterday to bag their first ever crown in the 80th NCAA senior basketball tournament.

"When I came to this team, I didn't know the situation. And I told them my only reason in accepting this job is to give them the championship. It kind of mayubang (a boast) at that time. And I know that they think I was too strict, pero sinasabi ko sa kanila na magbubunga ito (but I told them

we will be rewarded)," said new PCU coach Loreto Tolentino, who steered one of the most amazing turnarounds the league has ever seen.

And the spartan training worked wonders for the former whipping boys Tolentino inherited from Jimmy Mariano.

"Our coach said we had the talent. He was able to develop us and we gained confidence in our abilities," said Finals MVP Robert Sanz, who finished with 17 points and nine rebounds.

Most Improved Player Ian Garrido added: "Yung discipline na coach ang nagpanalo. Hanggang sa pagtulog sa dorm, binabantayan nyo kami (His discipline led us to this win. Even at bedtime, he was watching us)."

PCU, which joined the league eight years ago, set the tone for a big game early on, posting a

double-digit lead right from the first quarter, 20-9.

Perhaps the biggest contribution of Tolentino, who was serving a one-game suspension when the Dolphins won the title series opener by two points last Friday, was producing the first player to win the Most Valuable and Rookie of the Year awards in Gabby Espinas.

In junior play, the Lerran Squires forged a winter take-all showdown with the San Beda Cubs after nipping the defending champions, 81-76.

PCU 72—Sanz 17, Espinas 14, Castro 11, Garrido 9, Pelaga 7, Geronimo 5, Solis 4, Balga 3, Cecilio 2.

PERPETUAL 60—Bautista 17, Arsenio 9, Javier 9, Cuervo 8.

PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY (PCU) won the 80th NCAA senior basketball tournament.

## Franz tests Koy

## SPECTATOR



Al S. Mendoza

slinger in Fonacier

For La Salle, it was sweet revenge.

In 2002, the Archers lost the crown to the Eagles, thereby ending La Salle's title streak at four from 1998 to 2001. And then last year, Ateneo ousted La Salle before bowing to Far Eastern University in the Finals.

Even though Ateneo beat La Salle in their first meeting this year after overcoming a 15-point deficit, that was no gauge as to the real firepower of the Archers. True enough as in their next two meetings, La Salle won convincingly.

The game on Sunday was almost a photocopy of their Game 2 meeting where La Salle virtually pounded Ateneo into submission with blazing run-and-gun attacks and a defense that could have even blocked the assault of the combined Allied forces onto Nazi Germany in World War II.

Macnab Cardona typified La Salle's deadly game by firing 24 points as he spearheaded an offense built on blinding dashes for the goal and decorated it with nifty passing some of which were of the eye-pleasing, no-look pass variety.

The third quarter of Sunday's game tied it all—La Salle poured in 19 points via blitzkrieg while starving Ateneo to a measly 7 points. That jacked up a 30-28 halftime La Salle lead to 49-35, from which Ateneo never recovered.

The final 69-55 score was the final proof of La Salle's superiority over a totally outclassed Ateneo.

Today marks the start of the championship series between La Salle and FEL in the 67th season of the UAAP.

FEL coach Koy Banal was quoted as saying he preferred defending the crown against La Salle than Ateneo.

I don't know what Koy is up to. But one sure thing I know is that he is up against the best coach in the league for nearly a decade now in La Salle's Franz Pumaren. In fact, with six Finals stints in his name in the last seven years, I wonder why no PBA team has bothered to tap the services of Franz Pumaren.

Perhaps, the perks in the UAAP have become too tempting to resist that's why Franz Pumaren hasn't hopped into the other yard?

Maybe, Nyoks and AGA have the answer.

FASTBREAK: Tito Rey Bautista will re-open his Tito Rey Restaurant tonight at Sunray Plaza on Amoroso St., Makati City. There will be boozing, dancing and singing to go with the main fare for the evening, which is eating, what else? Tito Rey, the pioneer behind the "kamayan craze" in the restaurant business that began in the '70s is actually back from a long stint in America. Welcome home, Tito Rey... Dr. Conde and Wilma Lopez will be the proud hosts to their friends tonight when they celebrate the feat recently achieved by one of their two daughters, the charming Maricelle. Maricelle, whose sister Minnie is taking up law at San Beda, had passed the board of medical exams with flying colors. Cheers, doc.



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## Experience . . . From page A23



OTONINO coaches Pumarén (left) and Banal

## Red Bull overpowers Spring-Laguna cagers

DARUSSALAM, Brunei—Red Bull Barako booked its second straight victory in the 4th Shell Invitational basketball tournament here Tuesday night by crushing another Philippine squad, Spring Cooking Oil-Laguna, 91-75, at the National indoor stadium in Berakas.

Powered by Lordy Tugade, Mick Pennisi and Rico Villanueva, the Barako of coach Yeng Guiao raced to a commanding 50-30 halftime lead and never looked back.

Red Bull posted its biggest lead of 23 points at the end of the third quarter.

Spring, top team in the North division of the ongoing National Basketball Conference, was reinforced by Americans Keith Priel and Faheem Nelson.

Tugade topscored for Red Bull with 14 points. Pennisi, Villanueva and Cyrus Baguio had 13

each and Junthy Valenzuela chipped in 10.

"I'm happy with the boys' performance," Red Bull Barako team owner George C. Chua said when he learned of the team's second straight victory in the tough tournament.

Red Bull was playing Brunei's national team at press time yesterday. Guiao's team goes up next against Purefoods, then Jones Cup champion You Lon Twisters of Taiwan and the Hankook Raiders of South Korea.

Red Bull made a rousing debut Sunday by blasting the Shanghai Sharks, mother team of the Houston Rockets' Yao Ming, 88-74.

Davonn Harp propelled Red Bull to its first win, scoring 20 points, grabbing eight rebounds and giving three assists in 25 minutes of play. Villanueva had 16, Tugade and Pennisi 14 each and new Barako Vergel Meneses contributed 11.



OFFICIALS and players of the Spring Cooking Oil-Laguna team, led by delegation head Tito Palma and team manager Dennis Villa-Ignacio, just before they flew to Darussalam, Brunei, Saturday to play in the Sultan's Cup invitational basketball tournament.

## Ex-pros head NBC All-Star selections

FORMER pros Egay Echavez of Ozamiz Cotta and Ogie Gumatay of Forward Taguig head the South and North Selections, respectively, in the National Basketball Conference All-Star Weekend set Oct. 1 and 2 in Baguio City.

Joining Echavez in the South team to be coached by former PBA star Al Sins of Tribu Sugbu are Marlon Basco, also of Ozamiz, Ruben dela Rosa, Chico Lanero, Ardie Larong and Alfie Grijardo of Cebu; Francis Sanz and Carlos Sayon of the Iloilo Warriors and Jesus Navares and Jason Alfeche of the Cagayan de Oro Stars.

Playing with Gumatay in the North squad to be handled by Baguio's Nap Garcia are Cardinals Jun Baures, Obet Giron, Melvin Pontanilla, Edbert Ton and Efrén Vales. Batangas' Sonny Manuac and Rodel Mallari, Taguig's Jimboy Robillos and Spring-Laguna's MC Caceres.

The All-Star game will be played on Oct. 2. A clinic for basketball fans and several skills' contests like the Three-Point Shootout, Slam Dunk, Two-Ball and Speed Challenge will be held on Oct. 1.

The All-Star Weekend highlights the ongoing NBC National Championship sponsored by Panasonic, Spring Cooking Oil, PCSO, Supico Lanes, Nature's Spring, Mineral Water, Cebu Farnes, Air Philippines, Supercat, Skygo Motorcycles, TransAsia, Acel and Molten.

## Laylo moves up; So close behind

Standings after Round 6:  
Mar: 4.5 points—NM Laylo;  
4.0—IM Gonzales, IM Garma, NM Nolasco; 3.5—FM Dominguez, "So"; 3.0—IM Nolasco, IM Roca, "NM Serador; 2.5—IM Dabla, FM Sales, NM Barbosa; 2.0—NM Carlos, "NM Mapa; "NM Diaz 1.5—NM Perez, Fazen. Women (after Round 4): 3.0—Quino; 2.5—WNM Mendosa, WFM Lomiso, WNM Castellano, WNM Salvador; 2.0—WNM Abares, Rivera, Carrasco; 1.5—WNM Cruz; 1.0—WMA Mariano, WMA Abares.

TAGAYTAY CITY—Ten-year-old Wesley So claimed his third victory in National Master Roland Joseph Perez Tuesday night to stay within sight of pacesetter NM Derwin Laylo in the National Chess Championship at the Tagaytay International Convention Center here.

So, the youngest ever fi-

nalist in the annual event, tallied 3.5 points in five games, a point behind Laylo's 4.5 in six games. So, who bested Perez in 44 moves of a Sicilian, took a bye in the fourth round.

Laylo posted his fourth win in a row at the expense of Fide Master Jesse Noel Sales in 23 moves of an English Opening.

Fifth round co-leaders IM Jayson Gonzales, IM Chito Garma and NM Rolando Nolasco split their respective sixth round matches to share second place with 4.0 points.

The top three players will join seeded players GMs Eugene Torre, Joey Antonio and GM-elect Mark Paragita in the team bound for the World Chess Olympiad slated Oct. 14-31 in Majorca, Spain. Marlon Bernardino

## Hundred Islands triathlon set Sunday

SPORTS tourism in the country's north gets a boost with the holding this weekend of the first-ever Hundred Islands Triathlon Open in Pangasinan.

Triathletes from Metro Manila and Northern Luzon are expected to battle for top honors in the punishing race sanctioned by the Triathlon Association of the Philippines.

The spins distance event, which kicks off at 6 a.m. Sunday

in Lucap Point in Alaminos is a project of the Department of Tourism as part of its program to promote sports tourism in the country's different regions in the country, said TRAP president Tona Carrasosa Jr.

It is held in conjunction with the National Tourism Week celebration and in cooperation with the Alaminos city government headed by Mayor Hernan Bruguiza.

number one team and we really have to be very competitive."

The best-of-three series will also be a showdown between the MVP frontrunners: FEU's Arwind Santos (13.4 points per game, 10.2 rebounds per game) against La Salle's Mar Cardona (16.6 ppg, 5.9 rpg).

Gametime is set at 4 p.m., right after the junior championship opener between the defending champion Ateneo Eaglets and the University of Santo Tomas Tiger Cubs at 2 p.m.

FEU and La Salle, which earned the twice-to-beat advantage in the Final Four, wasted no time wrapping up their semifinal assignments.

The Tamaraws disposed of the University of the East Warriors,

71-64, last Thursday, while the Archers drubbed their arch rivals Ateneo Eagles, 69-55, last Sunday.

The Archers' victory Sunday extended their winning streak to eight, the longest his season. But it was the Tamaraws who dealt the Archers their last defeat, 70-52, on Aug. 14.

La Salle, however, also owned a rout against the reigning champions, 69-54, in their first round encounter.

The Archers and the Tamaraws also clashed in the 2000 Finals, which La Salle swept, 2-0. They had four other titles meetings in the last two decades. La Salle winning in 1989 and 1998 and FEU in 1991 and 1997. Jasmine W. Payo

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**JENNIFER GARNER**

**Distributed by COLUMBIA PICTURES**

## Properly handled festival can do wonders

From page A28

activities and organizations.

We see the need for these activities to be funded, but we also know that quality local films need to be produced for the Filipino movie audience. So, we agree with some of our film leaders that another annual film festival should be put up, this time with a clear preference for quality productions.

The plan is particularly creditable, because it seeks to encourage the use of Filipino literary clas-

sics and prize-winning works as the basis for the movies to be entered in the new festival.

Details still have to be thrashed out, but the plan should be supported, because it could lend greater substance and significance to our film productions, especially if backed up by the avid viewership of our students and teachers.

Still, the Metro Manila Film Festival cannot be permitted to become completely commercial, to the utter compromise of quality and values.

And it should resolve its current problems involving its selection of official entries soonest, so the viewing public and our film people don't completely give up on the film fest's ability to reform itself.

Feedback

CONCLUSION of Jonathan Araullo's letter: "TV people should realize that television and radio have the power to destroy or develop society. Any knowledgeable broadcaster knows (ask the media people who ran in the last elections) how the electronic media can influence not only individuals but the entire country—and the world. When this power is entrusted to an individual or company, they have the obligation to use it responsibly. Television and radio are expected to inform, to entertain and to educate, with all three aspects given equal time.

Third, if TV people think that entertainment should dominate their programming, it's time for the government and other sectors to re-think the ways and means of how frequencies are awarded to certain groups. Perhaps a commercial broadcasting system is not appropriate for our country.

"I am not suggesting that we scrap the commercial aspect of television, but we should not leave it to advertisers to shape the broadcast industry. We should find a balance where the broadcasting system can contribute significantly to nation-building, and at the same time be able to sustain itself.

"It is better than some groups primarily making money out of vital government property without paying rent, while exploiting what they think the people want."

**Motorcade**

THE STERLING Campus Idol singing search hits the road with a motorcade this Friday, Sept. 24. It starts at SM Harrison Plaza goes past different schools in the University Belt area, and ends up at San Beda College, where live auditions will be held.

Sterling Campus Idol is presented by Sterling Notebook, Avanti Balpen and Peniel Writing Instrument, and produced by DL Media Focus International. For details, call 886-4407.

# MMTA

## METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

### MOVIE GUIDE

#### NOW SHOWING

<b>PREMIERE THEATRE</b> BOURNE SUPREMACY 13 GOING ON 30 THE TERMINAL EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING FENG SHUI ANACONDAS MINDHUNTERS SAVED HEAVEN'S POND BOURNE SUPREMACY EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING ANACONDAS	<b>FILINVEST</b> BOURNE SUPREMACY THE BOURNE SUPREMACY THE TERMINAL EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING THE NOTEBOOK THE BOURNE SUPREMACY FENG SHUI THE BOURNE SUPREMACY FENG SHUI SAVED EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING ANACONDAS BANGKOK HAUNTED 2	<b>EASTWOOD CINEMAS</b> BOURNE SUPREMACY THE BOURNE SUPREMACY THE TERMINAL EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING THE BOURNE SUPREMACY FENG SHUI EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING FENG SHUI ANACONDAS BANGKOK HAUNTED 2 FENG SHUI LAWS OF ATTRACTION EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING ANACONDAS BANGKOK HAUNTED 2 FENG SHUI ANACONDAS
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**September 18-24 SM Megamall**  
**September 25-26 SM Cebu**

**September 23 Black and White 9:30 pm**

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**1 BOURNE SUPREMACY**  
 11:15 FS/11:45 MF/  
 2:00/4:15/6:30/  
 8:45/10:35 LFS/  
 11:00 LMF/12:50 END

**2 SAVED**  
 11:40 FS/12:10 MF/  
 2:20/4:30/6:40/  
 8:50/10:25 LFS/  
 11:00 LMF/12:35 END

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1	FENG SHUI 10:30, 1:20, 4:30, 7:00, 10:20 PG-13
2	BOURNE SUPREMACY 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 10:00 R-13
3	THE TERMINAL 11:05, 2:00, 4:55, 7:50, 10:05 R
4	THE EXORCIST 11:40, 2:20, 5:00, 7:40, 10:30 PG-13

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<b>SAVED</b> PG-13 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30	<b>THE BOURNE SUPREMACY</b> PG-13 12:00, 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00	<b>THE TERMINAL</b> GP 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30
<b>FENG SHUI</b> PG-13 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10	<b>EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING</b> R13 12:10, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50	<b>THE BOURNE SUPREMACY</b> PG-13 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:20

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**KIP PARDUE**  
**HEAVEN'S POND**

**NOW SHOWING**

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THURSDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 23, 2004

# MOVIES

A27

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1 FENG SHUI PG-13 12:30PM, 2:45PM, 5:10PM, 7:30PM LMP: 10:00PM (PG-13)	3 THE TERMINAL PG-13 12:40PM, 3:30PM, 6:00PM LMP: 8:00PM (PG-13)
2 BOURNE SUPREMACY PG-13 10:50AM, 1:00PM, 3:30PM, 5:30PM, 7:30PM LMP: 10:00PM (PG-13)	4 EXORCIST PG-13 11:45AM, 2:00PM, 4:15PM, 6:30PM LMP: 8:45PM (PG-13)

**PREMIERE THEATRE** BOURNE SUPREMACY  
PG-13 12:30PM, 2:50PM, LMP: 5:00PM

Shang-La Plaza

**THEATRE MALL**  
GREENHILLS

**1 BOURNE SUPREMACY**  
PG-13 11:00, 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10:15

**2 SAVED**  
PG-13 11:00, 1:10, 3:25, 5:40, 7:55, 10:10

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MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB: MAMMOORIA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BLOOD AT SAGA: KASHIMARI
ROBIN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUEAT
TANDEM-2	KATAMUND LAYSHI KO
TIMES	COY: A GUN & A BOMB

**QUEZON CITY**

ACT-1	SURVIVAL: SAKO
ACT-2	KAKO KO PERGAMASATI
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SPIRIT
ACT-4	MANGGANG KALAKA PAKALAY
ACT-5	EMANATION
ACT-6	ALAN APARI
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PATAK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

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B	CLOSED
C	CLOSED

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CINEMA 1 2364 THE ABYSS: THE TERMINAL, PRINCESS OF THE SEA, 2000

CINEMA 2 2364 THE ABYSS: THE TERMINAL, PRINCESS OF THE SEA, 2000

**CAINTA RIZAL**

STAR LUCIA EAST	(601-5071 0-10)
CINEMA-1	MIMORANTE
CINEMA-2	TAKAW TINGIN
CINEMA-3	GOING ON 30
CINEMA-4 (HOLLYWOOD)	BOURNE SUPREMACY
CINEMA-5 (HOLLYWOOD)	BETTER THAN SEX: RE-ISSUE
CINEMA-6	THE TERMINAL
CINEMA-7	MASARAP BANG BIRIN (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-8	HAUNTED SPIRIT 2
CINEMA-9 (HOLLYWOOD)	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
CINEMA-10 (HOLLYWOOD)	BOURNE SUPREMACY
CINEMA-11 (HOLLYWOOD)	SAVED
CINEMA-12	HEAVEN'S POND
CINEMA-14	ANACARDIUM
CINEMA-15	COY

**LORES**

CINEMA-1	SAVED
CINEMA-3	KAKO KO PERGAMASATI

**NE CINEMAGIC-CABANATUAN**

CINEMA-1	FENG SHUI
CINEMA-2	BOURNE SUPREMACY
CINEMA-4	BOURNE SUPREMACY

**UNIWIIDE COASTAL MALL**

CINEMA-1	SAVED
CINEMA-2	KAKO KO PERGAMASATI
CINEMA-4	COY

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HEAVEN HELP US







# ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Text us your feedback: Inquirer ent.nakakacitymessage to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

## GMA 7 axes Phoemela from 'Extra Challenge'

By Marinel R. Cruz

GMA 7 has "prematurely" ended its talent contract with "Extra Challenge" co-host Phoemela Barranda because "certain provisions" in the contract have not been met.

GMA network head of publicity for news and public affairs Jayce Perlas confirmed this to INQUIRER Entertainment last Tuesday. Perlas, however, refused to say which contract requirements Phoemela failed to meet.

A GMA 7 insider said the provisions in Phoemela's contract do not concern her commercial endorsements or ramp modeling jobs, but "a bad habit."

Phoemela's talent contract with GMA 7 is scheduled to expire this

month, the model-TV host told INQUIRER Entertainment in a telephone interview.

Phoemela also did not want to comment on the issue, saying "it is a legal matter." She referred INQUIRER Entertainment to her manager, Jing Mons, who is now in New York City. Phoemela has been getting good reviews as Paolo Bediones' "new partner" when GMA 7 decided to terminate her talent contract. But she said there is no bad blood between her and GMA 7.

She said she wanted to "pass the opportunity (of hosting 'Extra Challenge') to other girls," and at the same time "accept other offers."

Phoemela won the "Ka-

pala" competition for a new co-host for "Extra Challenge" last December 2003. She competed a la "Fear Factor" with former beauty queen Joanna Penolosa, cable host Reema Chanco, former beauty queen and host Josephine Canonizado and sexy comedian Ethel Booba to fill the slot vacated by Mimam Quiambao.

Phoemela hosts "Extra Challenge" with "Texter's Choice" winner Ethel Booba.



BARRANDA out because of "a bad habit."

**Araneta Center**  
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

**ALI MALL CINEPLEX**

3	<b>FENG SHUI</b> 11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
4	<b>BOURNE SUPREMACY</b> 12:15 pm 2:35 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
5	<b>EXORCIST</b> 12:15 pm 2:35 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
6	<b>HEAVEN'S POND</b> 12:15 pm 2:35 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
7	<b>SAVED</b> 12:15 pm 2:35 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm

**ARANETA COLISEUM**

Sep 23	LA SALLE vs FEU
Sep 24	UPHDS vs PCU (if necessary)
Sep 25	BLUE Live in Manila
Sep 26	LA SALLE vs FEU
Sep 30	LA SALLE vs FEU (if necessary)
Oct 2	UAAP ALL STAR GAME
Dec 11	JULIO IGLESIAS CONCERT
Dec 25	DISNEY ON ICE - Princess Classics

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6	THE TERMINAL
7	13 GOING 30

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Sep 25, Saturday, 10:00am to 9:00pm  
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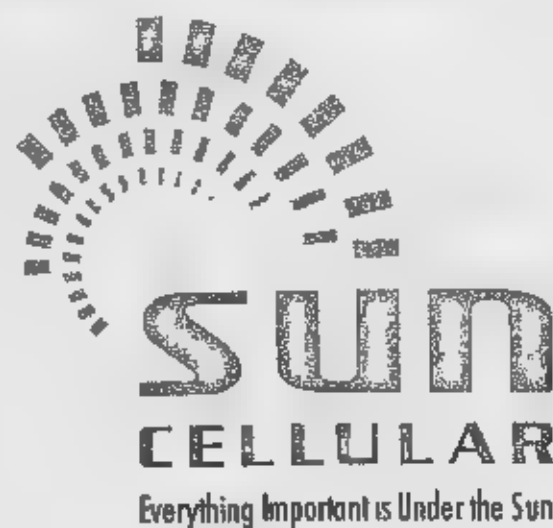
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THURSDAY,  
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Editor Raul O. Marcelo  
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# BUSINESS

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## ADB raises RP growth forecast to 5.5%

By Doris C. Dumlo

THE ASIAN Development Bank yesterday upgraded its economic growth outlook for the Philippines for this year and 2005, but warned that the country would be among the Asian countries likely to suffer the worst from the sky-rocketing oil prices.

In its semi-annual Asian Development Outlook, the bank projected that the domestic economy would grow by 5.5 percent this year and next year, up from 5 percent projection during the last assessment in April.

The upward revision was prompted by the higher-than-expected 6.3-percent growth in gross domestic product (GDP) in the first half of the year, which was driven by strong consumer spending. But the Philippines is still seen among the laggards in Southeast

Asia this year, along with Indonesia and Cambodia, which are forecast to grow this year by 4.8 and 4.5 percent.

"Indonesia and the Philippines, while performing well, are performing below their potentials," said ADB's chief economist Ifzal Ali.

"Vietnam is the stellar performer in the next two years, followed by Singapore, while Thailand will continue to do well. Malaysia has also rebounded significantly," he said.

Among the group of 10 countries comprising developing Asia, the bank also said Thailand and the Philippines would be the worst hit by rising oil prices. Others that were expected to be severely affected included mainland China, Hong Kong, India, Korea, Malaysia and Singapore.

It noted that the most vulnerable economies were those highly dependent on oil imports and were less energy efficient than most industrial countries. The bank said there was a need to phase out fuel subsidies and adopt measures to encourage the more efficient use of oil, such as providing tax incentives to develop and use alternative renewable energy sources.

"Selective measures to bring down oil consumption in the short

run may be required," it said.

Overall, the bank has jacked up its economic growth forecast for Southeast Asia to 6.2 percent this year and 5.7 percent next year, from the earlier outlook of 5.7 percent and 5.4 percent, respectively.

Vietnam is seen growing by 7.5 percent this year and in 2005, and Singapore, by 8.1 percent and 4.2 percent, respectively.

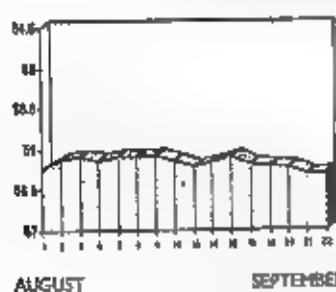
On the other hand, Thailand is expected to grow 6.4 percent and 6.6 percent this year and next while Malaysia is seen growing by 6.8 percent and 6 percent.

In the case of the Philippines, the ADB said that achieving early consensus on reforms was critical. Despite the stronger growth expected, he warned of the ad-

ADB/62

### INDICATORS CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 56.32 = \$

As of 5 p.m., Sept. 22, 2004

Y 110.03 = \$

As of 5 p.m., Sept. 22, 2004

GOLD: \$404.30-404.80

per ounce Hong Kong, Sept. 21, 2004

### STOCK MARKET

Stocks end higher for 3rd day

STOCKS rose yesterday as the central bank signaled it wanted to fuel economic growth by not matching a hike in US interest rates. Analysts said investors snapped up favored blue chips like second-ranked mobile phone firm Globe Telecom Inc., top property firm Ayala Land Inc. and leading mall developer SM Prime Holdings Inc.

Telecom stocks have been favored due to expectations the sector will continue to benefit from huge demand for mobile phones, while many analysts said the property sector is now coming out of a prolonged slump.

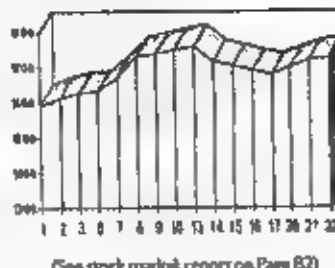
The central bank said yesterday it remained comfortable with US interest rates after the US Federal Open Market Committee raised its benchmark rates by 25 basis points to 1.75 percent, adding to similar increases in June and August.

The Bangko Sentral n Pilipinas has not touched its benchmark rates since a cut of 25 basis points in July 2003 that matched a similar move by the Fed. The bank's overnight borrowing rate is 6.75 percent and its lending rate is 9 percent.

"This is good for the market. Despite inflationary pressures due to rising oil prices, the central bank wants to keep the economy strong," said AB Capital economist analyst Jose Vistan.

The main stock index rose 0.42 percent or 7.2 points to 1,727.88 points, even as losers beat gainers 43 to 37. The index is up 19.8 percent this year, making it one of the top performers in Asia.

Reuters



(See stock market report on Page B2)

### REVENUE COLLECTION

## Gov't agencies miss targets

By Michelle V. Resno

THE NATIONAL government is being urged to strictly monitor the revenue-collection performance of government agencies amid the country's lingering fiscal problem.

According to the National Tax Research Center, an attached agency of the Department of Finance tasked to conduct revenue-related studies, there were quite a number of agencies that have been under-performing in terms of collecting revenue for the government.

"Attention should be called of agencies among the Top 50 collectors who have not met their collection targets," the NTRC said in a performance report on the collection of government agencies submitted to the Department of Finance.

The collections being expected from gov-

ernment agencies consisted of the revenue coming from service fees and charges they get from the public.

NTRC said the government agencies that failed to reach their collection targets by the biggest margins during the first semester of 2004 included the Department of Energy, the Commission on Higher Education, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Labor and Employment, and the Energy Regulatory Commission.

The DOE only collected P106.14 million compared with its P1.16-billion target. CHED only collected P30 million compared with its P117-million target. The DFA collected only P421 million versus a target of P1.2 billion. DOLE collected only P39.89 million against a target of P93.74 million. Lastly, ERC collected only P43.52 million compared with its P78.57-million target.

## SMC allots P15B for local expansion

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FOOD and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. (SMC) will set aside P15 billion starting this year until 2006 for local expansion projects.

"This consistent focus to grow our home market reflects SMC's continuing confidence in the Philippine economy," Eduardo M. Cojuangco Jr., SMC chair and chief executive officer said in a statement.

A significant portion of SMC's expansion will be in the countryside, helping generate employment and livelihood particularly in the rural areas. Sources said the expansion would be financed through existing cash and credit lines.

SMC is scheduled to inaugurate this year its Pure Foods Hormel Plant in Cavite as well as

SMC/62

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# iBank plans to beef up capital through tier-2 route

By Doris C. Dumiao

**INTERNATIONAL** Exchange Bank, which is set to debut on the Philippine Stock Exchange this December, plans to further beef up its equity after its initial public offering using subordinated debt or the so-called tier 2 capital.

"The capital market is an integral part of our expansion plan," iBank executive vice president Antonio Montecupa Jr. said in a press briefing yesterday.

He said proceeds from the IPO and the succeeding tier 2 capital raising would allow the bank to take advantage of expansion opportunities that would be available in the future.

The bank is set to offer 4.42 to 8.35 million primary common shares, representing 15.25 percent of its post-IPO capital, at a price

range of P16 to P19 each. The offering will allow the bank to raise between P71 million and P159 million in fresh funds. The stocks will have a par value of P10.

He said the proceeds would allow the bank to accelerate the expansion of its operations and achieve significant profit growth.

The bank plans to increase its branch network from the current 71 to as much as 120. As the BSP has imposed a moratorium on branch expansion, however, the way to achieve this expansion is either to buy branches of banks closed by Philippine Deposit Insurance Co., buy the excess branches of other banks or acquire another bank.

Its preferred route, however, is to grow organically. Meanwhile, other expansion initiatives included the upgrade of its information technology architecture,

continuous career development and productivity enhancement programs for its employees.

The PSE is currently processing the listing application covering the bank's common shares. The issue and lead manager is ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners Inc.

But since raising capital through additional equity is more expensive than borrowing, the bank plans to raise tier-2 capital by next year.

iBank president Ramon Sy said the bank had yet to decide how much to raise from tier 2 capital, but the offering would most likely be in the form of peso instruments.

Even without the tier 2 capital, however, Montecupa said the bank had a capital adequacy ratio of about 14 percent, higher than the minimum of 10 percent prescribed by the BSP.

Since its opening as a full-service commercial bank in September 1995, the bank has achieved robust growth by focusing on the needs of the middle market, transactional deposit customers and large and medium-sized investors for its distribution of fixed income.

Sy said iBank was now the biggest bank organized after the banking sector was liberalized and was now even bigger than most of the older banks.

The bank's total assets amounted to P43.9 billion as of end 2003 compared to P14.4 billion as of end 1996. As of the same period, its deposits stood at P43.9 billion.

Although the bank can qualify to become a universal bank once it lists on the stock exchange, Sy said the bank planned to stick to its core banking competencies.

## SMC allots P15B for local expansion

From page B1

two Pure Foods facilities in Batangas—a flour mill and flour blending facility.

SMC is also putting up feed mill plants in Bataan and Misamis Oriental, a broiler farm in Bulacan as well as hog farms in Bukidnon and Tarlac where it is also setting up a pet food plant and a veterinary medicine facility.

SMC will likewise establish an industrial park in Laguna, and the complex will host its manufacturing plants for value-added food products.

Cojuangco said roughly P5 billion will be spent for these food projects alone over the next three years.

SMC is also pursuing highly integrated agro-industrial zones as its growth model. Once a full operation, these zones, which are near abundant sources of raw materials, will link with SMC's manufacturing and distribution channels that are being reengi-

neered to ensure the lowest possible cost for the company's products.

SMC will also invest "billions" to take advantage of the expected growth in beverage consumption.

SMC is expanding and modernizing its breweries in Molo, Valenzuela, and in San Fernando, Pampanga.

In Negros Occidental, SMC will expand the capacity of Distilleria Bago, a hard liquor plant operated by Ginebra San Miguel Inc.

Site development, meanwhile, is nearing completion for another alcohol distillery at an industrial site in Misamis Oriental.

"These particular expansion projects are growth platforms that will boost San Miguel's export earnings capability particularly from liquor. They will also contribute substantially in our raw material import substitution and help save foreign exchange for the country," Cojuangco said in a statement.

## PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 22, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
<b>BANKS &amp; FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>					
Bank of the Philippine Islands	17.25	17.25	17	17.25	43,500
Bank of the South Seas	48	48	48	48	1,000
Bank of the East Asia	5.30	5.30	5.30	5.30	1,000
Bank of the Philippine Islands	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50	1,000
Bank of the Philippine Islands	28.50	28.50	28.50	28.50	225,300
Bank of the Philippine Islands	22.50	22.50	22.50	22.50	1,500
Bank of the Philippine Islands	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50	700
Bank of the Philippine Islands	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50	47,000
Bank of the Philippine Islands	21.25	21.25	21.25	21.25	17,100
Bank of the Philippine Islands	24.75	24.75	24.75	24.75	8,200
<b>FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>					
Bank of the Philippine Islands	180	180	180	180	150
Bank of the Philippine Islands	24.50	24.50	24.50	24.50	800
Bank of the Philippine Islands	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	280,000
Bank of the Philippine Islands	1.19	1.19	1.19	1.19	30
Bank of the Philippine Islands	1.19	1.19	1.19	1.19	1,100
<b>COMMERCIAL &amp; INDUSTRIAL</b>					
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	20.75	20.75	20.75	20.75	83,300
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	1,710
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	1,370
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	28,000
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2,300
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	6,250
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	20,100
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	1,500
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	2,400
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	2,800,000
<b>POWER &amp; UTILITY</b>					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.25	15.25	15.25	15.25	31,300
Manila Electric Co. B	23.75	23.75	23.75	23.75	1,070
Manila Electric Co. C	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	85,100
Manila Electric Co. D	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	46,100
Manila Electric Co. E	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	46,100
<b>TRANSPORTATION SERVICES</b>					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	830,000
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.16	2.16	2.16	2.16	1,100
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	10,100
Asian Terminals Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	10,100
Asian Terminals Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,300
<b>CONSTRUCTION &amp; OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS</b>					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	1,300,280
Engineering Equip. Inc.	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	8,470
<b>FOOD, BEVERAGES &amp; TOBACCO</b>					
Alabaca Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	45,000
Alabaca Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4,100
Alabaca Corp.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	2,400
Alabaca Corp.	20	20	20	20	181,800
Alabaca Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	126,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	76,000
Alabaca Corp.	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	287,200
Alabaca Corp.	88.5	88.5	88.5	88.5	3,900
Alabaca Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	100,000
Alabaca Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	5,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	280,000
<b>MINING</b>					
Alabaca Corp.	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	24,000,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	5,000,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	25,250,000
Alabaca Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	142,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	2,200,000
Alabaca Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	69,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	500,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	102,000,000
Alabaca Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	16,100
Alabaca Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	30,100
Alabaca Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	40,100
Alabaca Corp.	14	14	14	14	201,100
Alabaca Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	4,400,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	3,700,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,500,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	1,300,000
Alabaca Corp.	2.32	2.32	2.32	2.32	6,000,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.036	0.036	0.036	0.036	4,100,000
Alabaca Corp.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	528,500
Alabaca Corp.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	3,000,000
Alabaca Corp.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	7,000,000
Alabaca Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	7,000,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	1,750,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	35,700
Alabaca Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	10,100
Alabaca Corp.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	1,100
Alabaca Corp.	2.46	2.46	2.46	2.46	17,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	1,600,000
Alabaca Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	300,000
<b>MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION &amp; TRADING</b>					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	5,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	182,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	1,800,000
<b>RETAIL, DISTRIBUTION &amp; OTHER SERVICES</b>					
Belmont Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	2,370,000
Belmont Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	2,370,000
Belmont Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	2,370,000
Belmont Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	2,370,000
<b>COMMODITIES, PREPARED &amp; WHOLESALE</b>					
ABIS-CEM Holdings Corp. (PSE)	21	21	21	21	438,000
ABIS-CEM Holdings Corp. (PSE)	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
ABIS-CEM Holdings Corp. (PSE)	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
ABIS-CEM Holdings Corp. (PSE)	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
ABIS-CEM Holdings Corp. (PSE)	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
<b>OTHERS</b>					
Centex Escorial University	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	18,000
Centex Escorial University	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	18,000
Centex Escorial University	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	18,000
Centex Escorial University	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	18,000
Centex Escorial University	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	18,000
<b>DISCLOSURES</b>					
<b>KEPPEL Philippines Marine Inc.</b> will hold its special stockholders' meeting on Nov. 10, 8:30 a.m. at the KPH Boardroom, Country Space 1 Building, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of Oct. 22 will be entitled to vote at the meeting.					
<b>ELECTED officers of Far Eastern University</b> were Lourdes Montinola, chair; Aurelio Montinola III, vice chair; Lydia Echaz, president; Angelina Jose, corporate secretary; Fe Canilao, chief financial officer; Lydia Palaypay, vice president-academic affairs; Celerino Sta. Maria, vice president-operations; Herminia Malwal, treasurer; Glenn Nagal, comptroller; Cecilia Antido, AVP-academic affairs; Renato Silva, AVP-operations and Severino Garcia, compliance officer.					
<b>PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co.</b> disclosed the purchase by company chair, Manuel Pangilinan, of 10,455 PLDT shares at P1,330 each. Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research					

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## SMC allots P15B for local expansion

From page B1

two Pure Foods facilities in Batangas—a flour mill and flour blending facility.

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## ADB...

From page B1

verse impact of a huge budget deficit, larger public sector debt and high unemployment rate on top of external shocks such as increases in global oil prices and interest rates.

The report also lamented that the robust economic growth failed to generate more jobs for the growing workforce, as indicated by the rising unemployment and underemployment.

The bank said the attainment of its more bullish growth forecasts for the Philippines this year and next would depend on key reform programs.

"While some analysts have disputed the President's 'fiscal crisis' assertion (on the basis of a technical definition related to the country's current capacity to pay debts and access international capital markets, the central point is the government's clear recognition of the need for action to prevent an already precarious fiscal position from worsening," the report said.

It also warned of the government's vulnerability to high levels of contingent liabilities primarily for underwriting the finances of government-owned and -controlled corporations, government financial institutions and the public pension fund system.

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
<b>BANKS &amp; FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>					
Bank of the Philippine Islands	17.25	17.25	17	17.25	43,500
Bank of the South Seas	48	48	48	48	1,000
Bank of the East Asia	5.30	5.30	5.30	5.30	1,000
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Bank of the Philippine Islands	28.50	28.50	28.50	28.50	225,300
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Bank of the Philippine Islands	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50	700
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ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	1,710
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	1,370
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	28,000
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100
ABIS-CEM Broadcasting Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2



# DOF puts P91.9-B budget deficit cap on 14 GOCCs

By Michelle V. Remo

HOPING to inject fiscal discipline into state-owned firms, the Department of Finance put a cap on the combined budget deficit of the 14 monitored government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) for next year.

The 14 monitored GOCCs were directed to post a combined budget deficit of P91.86 billion in 2005, 27 percent lower than the P125.51-billion budget gap expected of them this year.

The monitored GOCCs include the following: National Power Corp., National Food Authority,

Light Rail Transit Authority, Home Guaranty Corp., National Housing Authority, Manila International Airport Authority, Philippine Economic Zone Authority, Philippine National Oil Co., Philippine Ports Authority, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, National Development Co., Local Water Utilities Administration, National Electrification Administration and National Irrigation Administration.

The DOF monitors these firms due mainly to their heavy losses, especially Napocor.

For this year, Napocor's expected budget deficit of P80.346 bil-

lion was more than half of the P125.51-billion combined budget deficit of the monitored GOCCs.

Following Napocor was the National Food Authority with P10.640 billion, and the Light Rail Transit Authority with P9.016 billion.

For next year, the government wants Napocor's budget deficit lowered to only P59.736 billion (including that of Transmission Corp. and Power Sector Asset and Liabilities Management Corp.).

The expected lower deficit was partly attributed to the recent and coming power rate hikes.

The budget deficits of NFA and

LRTA were projected to be reduced to only P13.525 billion and P6.995 billion, respectively.

LRTA expects its budget deficit to be reduced partly by the expected approval of its request for fare hike.

State-owned companies are under fire for contributing to the heavy fiscal burden borne by the already financially troubled national government.

Of the P5.9-trillion public sector debt last year, the national government accounted for P3.4 trillion, and over P2.5 trillion was contributed by the debts of state-owned firms.

While the national govern-

ment had a bigger share, a substantial amount of its borrowings were intended to bail out GOCCs.

The government outlined several measures to cushion the adverse impact of the GOCCs' finances on

the national government.

These include the removal of the automatic guarantees of the national government on borrowings of GOCCs and putting a cap on the salaries of GOCC officials.

## DTI accredits 1st certification body

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry's Bureau of Product Standards has accredited SGS Philippines Inc. as an environmental management system (EMS) testing and certification agency.

The accreditation means SGS Philippines Inc. can now conduct testing on and issue certification to companies wishing to get ISO 14001 or the EMS quality check.

SGS Philippines can now check the adequacy of the EMS compliance of a company's production system based on local and international environmental laws before they can be issued ISO 14001.

The system of environmental audit for those companies seeking ISO 14001 include checking the company's pollution control and control of hazardous chemicals.

The ISO 14001 certificates to be issued by SGS will provide the necessary credibility, added value and recognition that will make it easier for certified companies to sell their products or promote their services in other countries since the system is aligned with international standards. Moreover, the accreditation scheme assures consumers that the products and services they are buying from companies certified by accredited CBs meet standard requirements.

DTI-BPS director Jesus L. Moromull said SGS Philippines was the first certification body accredited for ISO 14001.

"With this development, more companies will be encouraged to apply for ISO 14001 certification," he said.

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1.6L V and 1.8L models MZR Engine 14 DOHC Power Assist Steering (EHPS), 6 CD In-dash w/ Automatic Level Controls, Steering Mounted Audio Switches, 1.6L V Black w/ Red accent Flat Woven Seats & Door Trims, Foglamps, 16" Aluminum Alloy Wheel, Black Radiator Grille w/ Body Color Top Bar, Anti-Lock Brake System w/ EBD, Dual SRS Airbags, 1.6L & Black Flat Woven Seats & Door Trims, Black Radiator Grille w/ Black Bar, 15" Aluminum Alloy Wheels, Driver-side SRS Airbag.

1.6L model shown. Color may vary.

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MAZDA QUEZON AVENUE 721 Quezon Avenue, Sto. Domingo, Quezon City / Phone: 712-3355, Fax: 742-2080  
MAZDA ALABANG Forest Corporate City, Alabang Zapote Road, Alabang, Muntinlupa City / Phone: 772-3189 to 91



## Asia shares dip on Japan fears

SINGAPORE—Asian shares dipped on Wednesday amid concern about the strength of Japan's recovery, while the dollar languished after a widely expected US interest rate increase.

Lackluster Japanese trade data helped push the Nikkei down 0.6 percent to a one-month closing low of 11,019.41.

Electronics companies were among the biggest losers, including Toshiba Corp., which fell 1.5 percent.

The benchmark 10-year Japanese government bond (JGB) reflected fears the Japanese export-led recovery was faltering.

Yields dipped 1.5 basis points to a four-month low of 1.460 percent, before returning to previous levels.

"Clearly, the Japanese economy has already peaked, even though some people still say it will remain strong," said Tadashi Kikugawa, head of JGB trading at Morgan Stanley.

The MSCI index of Asian share markets outside Japan fell 0.1 percent, and its tech-

nology component declined one percent. South Korea's index dropped 2.6 percent as investors interpreted central bank comments as meaning an expected rate cut would be delayed.

The central bank pledged preemptive steps should rising inflation threaten already weak consumer spending.

Profit-taking was also a factor for some recent gainers.

Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd., the world's biggest maker of memory chips, slipped 2.4 percent, and Hynix Semiconductor Inc. fell 4.5 percent.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index fell 0.1 and Singapore's Straits Times Index dropped 0.4 percent.

Australia was a bright spot. Stocks resumed a record-breaking run, reaching a new high as mining firms rose on the back of higher base metal prices.

The benchmark S&P/ASX 200 index rose 0.4 percent to a record 3,644.3 before easing back a bit. Reuters

## THIRD FOR THE YEAR

# US Fed raises interest rates

WASHINGTON—The US Federal Reserve on Tuesday raised interest rates for the third time this year by a quarter of a percentage point and said the economy was regaining momentum, signaling at least one more to come.

The widely expected and unanimous decision by the policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee moves the benchmark federal funds rate—which influences credit costs throughout the economy—to 1.75 percent from 1.5 percent.

The central bank lifted short-term rates by matching amounts at its policy sessions in June and on Aug. 10, ending a long period of super-low borrowing costs.

Many economists expect a fourth rise at the next meeting on Nov. 10, about a week after the US presidential elections.

"After moderating earlier this year partly in response to the substantial rise in energy prices, output growth appears to have regained some traction, and labor market conditions have improved modestly," the Fed said in a statement outlining its decision, which also increased the largely symbolic discount rate to 2.75 percent.

The Fed also said inflation pressures and expectations had eased despite a rise in energy costs.

It said risks to the US economy remained balanced between weaker growth and higher prices and repeated a pledge to undertake a "measured" course of rate increases.

Analysts said the Fed, with its carefully couched language, seemed to be keeping its options open on whether to steadily ratchet rates up or take a

pause if economic data weaken.

A Reuters poll of 22 top Wall Street bond dealers found all agreed the Fed would boost interest rates a further quarter percentage point in November.

At that point, 15 dealers think the Fed will hold at 2 percent through the end of the year while seven predicted another quarter percentage point hike at the eighth and final policy-setting session on Dec. 14.

One concern this year is that a soft pace of job creation and higher energy prices have put strain on consumers, who were the main support for a teetering US economy in the slow recovery from the 2001 recession. Retail sales fell in August.

Some economists believe the softness may persist and that the rate-rise cycle is near an end. Reuters

## Special PROJECT

# 74th National Day

## of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

### MESSAGES



I JOIN the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in celebrating their 74th National Day.

The consolidation and foundation of the Kingdom by King Abdul Aziz (Ibn Saud) in 1932 is indeed a very important event. It marked the creation of a great, prosperous and united nation that is a bastion of progress in the Middle East. Today, the Kingdom is a key player in the world's economy, a partner in the growth of developing nations, as well as a force for understanding among peoples of all faiths.

I take pride in the friendship and close cooperation that have persisted between our governments and peoples these many years. You continue to be gracious hosts to our many overseas workers, who in turn have ably contributed to the development and industrialization of the Kingdom. Our bilateral relations in trade and industry, and our common stand on important international concerns, remain as consistent and strong as ever.

I therefore have no other wish than for this celebration to bring forth greater progress in the Kingdom and a deeper sense of brotherhood and partnership between Filipinos and the Saudi people. On behalf of the entire Filipino nation, I extend my regard to the people of Saudi Arabia, and wish you all a joyful and meaningful celebration!

Mabuhay!

*Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo*  
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

President  
Republic of the Philippines



ON THE 9th Sha'ban 1425H corresponding to Sept. 23, 2004, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia celebrates its National Day. It is the 74th (based on the Hegrah calendar) celebration of a momentous event in its history, proclaiming the unification of the different tribes of the Kingdoms under the leadership of King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman - Al-Saud (May the blessings of Allah be upon him).

On this day in 1351H (1932), Arab history recorded the birth of this state with supremacy, power and dignity in the land of the Arab peninsula. This wide and vast state adopted all means of development and achieved stability and progress, and made the Holy Book of the Generous Allah and the Hadith of His Messenger Mohammad (Peace be upon him) as its constitution and way of life.

After more than 70 years of statehood and adopting a series of five-year development plans that started in 1970 and now the end-year of the 7th Plan, Saudi Arabia has achieved remarkable developments. The fact is that development in the Kingdom has not only been about building roads, airports, seaports, factories, water desalination plants, electricity, telecommunications networks and plants, but equally, if not more importantly, it has been about improving the well-being of the Saudi people and enhancing their capabilities by providing them better education and health services, a cleaner environment, etc.

The past six five-year plans, emphasis were on economic growth, development of human resources and diversification of the economy to reduce dependence on oil. However, the seventh Plan was formulated with the resolve to face the new challenges, such as fast rate of growth of population, unemployment, the need for speeding economic diversification, privatization, and due attention to the need of continuous expansion and maintenance of infrastructure. It also includes reforms of the administrative and financial setup, and restructuring of government services to raise the efficiency of delivering services. Another major theme in the plan is strengthening the development of technology and innovations through the build-up of a national science and technology base, considering the fact that growth has become increasingly tied to the level of financial growth.

As the 7th Plan is ending this year, the process of planning in Saudi Arabia is now entering a new stage characterized by greater emphasis on expanding private sector's role, increasing reliance on indicative planning with longer time horizon-up to 20 years, again, continuous emphasis in human resources development, and increasing emphasis on science and technology as the global economy shifts to knowledge-based economy.

Shifting to a new gear, the Saudi-Philippines relations is more than ever getting stronger everyday. Every new day, some 300 OFWs arrive in the Kingdom, joining the almost 1 million Filipinos who made Saudi Arabia their second home. Since 1973, millions of Filipino workers have worked in the Kingdom. Some hundred thousands of them have been returnees or keep coming back after their contracts had finished. Many have invited their immediate families, relatives and friends to join them in Saudi Arabia. Some find not only livelihood but peace and tranquility in Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, the humanitarian concern of the Saudi leadership regardless of race or religion, was demonstrated by the assistance extended by HRH Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz to the Filipino Samosir twins who were successfully separated in Saudi Arabia. Eight-month-old Princess Ann and Princess Mae Marzu were joined in the abdomen and pelvis and shared lower organs. They flew to Saudi early this year and were separated in March after a marathon 20-hour operation. The surgery by a 48-man medical team cost \$320,000 and was paid by the Crown Prince. Saudi Arabia's medical expertise in separating conjoined twins is considered to be among the best in the world. Eight sets of twins have been successfully separated recently. The Crown Prince has instructed the Saudi Arabian Embassy to continue looking after Princess Ann and Princess Mae. The twins along with their parents were received by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacanang on July 7. The President said the gesture of His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Abdullah, serves as a living symbol of the close relationships between the Philippines and Saudi Arabia as well as the sincere friendship between the peoples of the two countries.

The average total trade between our two countries is more than \$1 billion a year with oil importation getting the bigger chunk. We do hope that the Philippines, like its Asian neighbors, should get a bigger share in the Saudi import market. The presence of a big number of OFWs in the Kingdom will not only be a market of Philippine products, but they could also promote the products to the Saudi market.

The partnership of the PNOG and the Saudi Aramco in the Petrom wherein the Saudi Aramco bought 40 percent of Petrom in 1993 for \$540 million has been beneficial to both parties. Aside from the profitability of the venture, the Philippines is guaranteed a continuous flow of the Saudi oil through Petrom.

Lastly, we welcome and wholeheartedly support the resumption of the GRP-MILF peace negotiations with prayers that that it will result to a lasting peace to Mindanao and that development and prosperity for all sectors will take place.

We extend also our congratulations to Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for her triumphant state visit to China, and wishing her good health and more success in the forthcoming Apec meeting in Chile.

*Mohammed Ameen Wali*  
Mohammed AMEEN WALI  
Ambassador

### Greetings and Best Wishes to:

The Custodian of the Holy Mosques  
King Fahad Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud

His Royal Highness  
Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz

His Excellency Ambassador Mohammed Ameen Wali

The Saudi Arabia Government and the Saudi People

On the Celebration of their National Day



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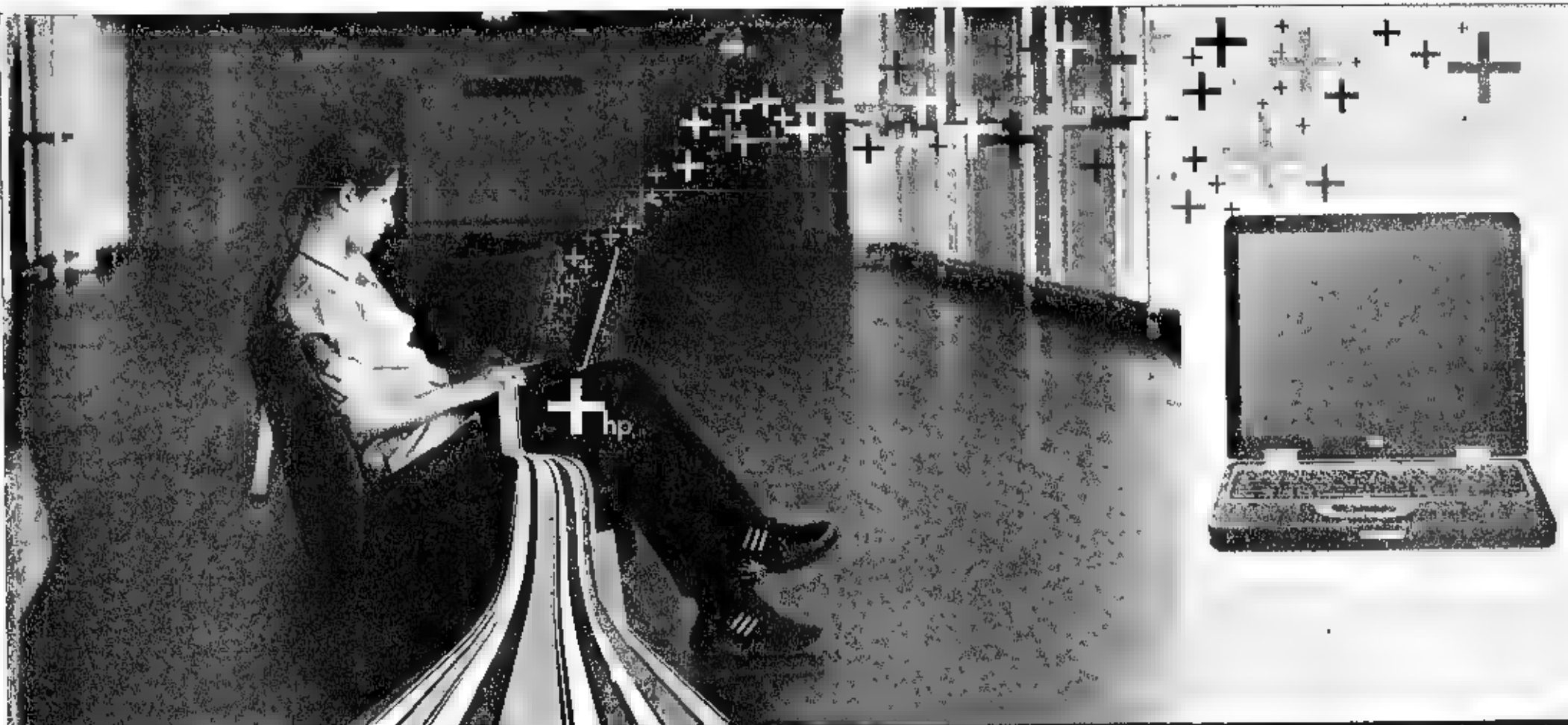
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**Cosmo's Bachelor Bash**

COSMOPOLITAN magazine unleashes the sexiest, most gorgeous hunks in 2004 in the September Men! Men! Men! Issue. Get the chance to see these sizzling-hot men stripped down to the bare essentials at the Cosmo Bachelor Bash, Sept. 23, at 8 p.m. at the NBC Tent, The Fort. And to further sizzle up the party, Astrin-o-sol Ice is inviting all the girls to visit the

Astrin-o-sol Ice Kissing Booth. Girls get the chance to kiss gorgeous hunks in the booth, get free samples, and even join the Sexiest Kiss game and the much-awaited Kiss or Dare game.

**'Jammin' at the Pond'**

THE 888 Fishing Place, Bar and Restaurant in Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite will stage a 1st anniversary presentation on Oct. 2, at 7 p.m. Acoustic bands like Feedback, 2nd Session,

and Revive Band will lead the one-night, non-stop party titled "Jammin' at the Pond" powered by Musak Pro audio system and sponsored by Mahar Supermarkets. Tickets are priced at P 100 inclusive of one drink. 888 Fishing Place, Bar and Restaurant is the hottest anglers hub in Cavite. It is located in Cavendish road, Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite some 18 kms. from Manila. For reservation call, 888 Fishing Place at (046) 434-0803.

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perts notably in the European Union, has linked up with PWU to institutionalize a program for upgrading the skills and competencies of our Filipino nurses through information development, hands-on training on simulation courses, and upgrading of instructional facilities and materials. Interested nurses are enjoined to email their resume and photo to pwunursing@pwu.edu.ph for a confirmed registration.

**PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION of the PHILIPPINES**

*Celebrating 27 years of excellence in Production Management*

will hold its 17th Annual National Convention at the New World Renaissance Hotel on September 30 and October 1, 2004. The event will cap the year long celebration of PROMAP's 27th anniversary in the field of manufacturing management. Her Excellency President GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO declaring the period from September 27 to October 1, 2004, Proclamation no. 710 as "Production Management Week"

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CHEMWORLD Fragrance Institute will offer free seminars on perfume-making and aromatherapy on Sept. 18 and 25, and Oct. 2 and 9 (Saturdays), 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The half-day hands-on training will give participants practical and technical knowledge on perfumery and aromatherapy. Easy-to-follow formulations plus tips on how to start a fragrance business will be presented in the seminar. Complete supplies and materials, including a comprehensive manual, will be made available. Thus at the end of the seminar Chemworld guarantees that the participants can start the business as soon as they get home. While the seminar itself is free, there is a minimal fee of P100 to cover cost of the materials which will be used in the hands-on session. The compounded perfume products may be taken home by the participants. If you are looking for a serious business opportunity corporate give-aways, or holiday presents, here's the answer. For reservation all interested parties can call (02) 890-9844 to 47 ext. 14 or 39 and look for Alex Guiao or call mobile numbers 0917-8736547 and 0917-8736548 or send email to [chemworld@chemworld.com.ph](mailto:chemworld@chemworld.com.ph)

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# OBITUARIES

*"I am the resurrection and the life;  
 he who believes in Me, will live even when he dies."*  
 John 11:25

## Our Most Beloved Ma. Esperanza "Pinky" G. Gunn

Peacefully passed on to eternal life to join our Lord  
 on September 15, 2004 in Vancouver, Canada

She is mourned by her loving husband, Dan  
 Parents, Serafin and Virginia Gonzalez  
 Siblings, Tonito & Eileen, Marianne & Ted,  
 Cristina, Raymond & Thess, Georgina  
 and the Gonzalez, Zamora and Gunn Families

Her remains lie in state at Capilla de la Virgen,  
 Santuario de San Antonio Parish, Forbes Park, Makati City from  
 Thursday, September 23 to Sunday, September 26.

In celebrating her blessed life, funeral services will be held on Sunday,  
 September 26 after an offering of the Holy Eucharist at 2:00 o'clock in  
 the afternoon. Interment will be on Sunday, September 26, 2004, at the  
 Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the Mass.

In lieu of flowers, please send your donations to PGH Medical  
 Foundation, Inc., Ground Floor, Nurses Home Philippine General  
 Hospital, Taft Avenue, Ermita, Manila  
 Tel. Nos. (632) 536-2874; (632) 521-8450 local 3061  
 Email: sec@pghmedfoundation.org

## Judge Facundo T. Palafox (ret.)

of  
 Bani, Pangasinan and Badoc, Ilocos Norte  
 Husband of Aurelia Obtinario (†)

November 7, 1909 - September 21, 2004

Children:

Nora and Deo Custodio  
 Lilia and Jose U. Fernandez  
 Jose Voltaire and Antonieta  
 Elena and Carlos Yu  
 Facundo Jr. and Bernadette  
 Tita  
 Pitoy and Cris  
 Cherry and David Padua

Grandchildren and Great-grandchildren

His body lies at Santuario de San Jose,  
 East Greenhills,  
 San Juan, Metro Manila

Interment will be at Manila Memorial Park  
 following the 8:00 a.m. Mass  
 on Saturday, September 25, 2004.

*I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes  
 to the Father except through Me. John 14:6*

## SOCORRO SANTOS PAULINO

of Oas, Albay

Peacefully joined her Creator  
 on Sept. 21, 2004 at the age of 79.

Her loving children Angelita and Baldur Host of  
 Stuttgart, Germany; Fr. Felino Paulino of Seattle, WA.;  
 Roberto and Ruth Paulino of San Diego, CA.; Chona and  
 Amor Tayamen of Legazpi City; and Magdalena and  
 Stephen Lucas of Bremerton, WA.; her grandchildren,  
 relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the  
 eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence at #34  
 Olbes St., Vel-Amor Subd., Legazpi City

Funeral Mass will be at the Our Lady of Fatima Church  
 at Tahao Road, Legazpi City at 9:00 a.m., Saturday,  
 September 25, 2004 and interment will be at Prestine  
 Memorial Gardens, Legazpi City.

*I am  
 the way,  
 the truth  
 and the  
 life.  
 No one  
 comes  
 to the  
 Father  
 except  
 through  
 Me.*  
 John 14:6

*"My soul, be at rest in God since from whom comes any hope"*  
 Psalm 41:13

## CARMENCITA I. DAGDAYAN

Peacefully joined our Creator  
 and her husband Bayani A. Dagdayan (†)  
 on September 22, 2004 at the age of 68.

Her loving children Chit and Ray, and grandson Kevin; brothers  
 Emer, Gema and Leony; sister Ning and relatives request the readers  
 to join them in praying for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her body lies in state at 2601 Old Panaderos St., Sta. Ana, Manila.

Interment will be on September 25, 2004 at the Loyola Memorial  
 Park in Sucat, Parañaque after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

Always caring...

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**WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS  
 and bank-to-bank payments**

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: • Copy of Death Certificate • Any identification document (LD.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS • DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS • FREE OBIT

**Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses  
 his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39**

## Our Dearly Beloved

## Fatima Mahan Lee

of Jolo, Sulu and Quezon City

Peacefully joined the Lord and her husband Lee Peng Ching  
 on September 21, 2004 at the age of 94.

Her children Chin Chu & John Ramos Yeo (†), Chin Bee (†),  
 Carolyn & Enrique Luy, Evelyn, Pat & Bernadette, Robert &  
 Linda, Rosalind & Lee Hiong Wee, Dennis & Annabel,  
 Marilyn & Perry Pe, and Carmen & Robert Tan; grandchildren,  
 great-grandchildren and great great-grandchildren request the pious  
 readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz (Superior Chapel),  
 Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 25, 2004, 9:00 a.m.

## EMILITA "MILITA" LIM CRUZ

Peacefully and happily joined our dear Lord  
 & Blessed Mother on Sept. 22, 2004 at the age of 66.

Her dear children TINA, BABO, ISA, TONI  
 and LALA, children-in-law JIGS, IJA, BENDEN,  
 I-TO and DANNY, grandchildren, brothers, sisters  
 and other relatives and friends mourn her passing  
 but delight in knowing that she will be finally  
 reunited with Ragle, her loving husband in heaven.

Her body lies in state at Chapel A & B, Christ  
 the King Church in Greenmeadows,  
 Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday,  
 Sept. 26, 2004, schedule to be  
 announced later.

*"Hear me in the wind  
 See me in the season's change  
 Be glad in the moment."*

The Philippine Breast Cancer Network  
 marks the September 23rd as

## Fallen Breast Cancer Warrior's Day

All are enjoined in a moment of silence in memory of  
 all the women in our country who fought a fierce  
 battle against a most unacceptable environmental  
 epidemic that has become the leading cause of death  
 of women in the Philippines today

**"Kalayaan mula sa Breast Cancer!"**

Textline: (9919) 314-2072  
 Email: [cpbcn@iname.com](mailto:cpbcn@iname.com)




## Power-intensive Luzon users to choose own source

was working overtime to meet the end-2005 target for the privatization of 70 percent of Napocor's generating capacity in Luzon and the Visayas.

LRTA fares range from P12 to P15 while the fare charged by MRT 3 range from P9.50 to P15.

The PAJ is an association of editors, reporters and correspondents from mainstream media and information/media offices of private and government agencies involved in agricultural reform and environment.





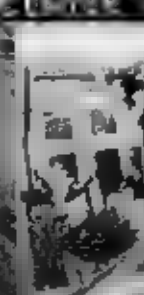



# CONEX

UNITED ARCHITECTS OF THE PHILIPPINES

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Fax No/s.: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Add.: \_\_\_\_\_

Product Lines: \_\_\_\_\_

*Fax back form at (02) 372-1796. For further inquiries, contact Mr. Nicole Macalinao at (02) 412-3311 or (02) 412-6364.*



# Job Market

Part 1

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We have a large number of men and women who have been searched and screened for you.

**TRAINING & EDUCATION**  
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**TRAINING & EDUCATION**  
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**More employment opportunities in today's**

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

# Job Market

Where You Find The Best





**Text us your feedback:** Include our name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

**By Tessa R. Salazar**

We decided to "transfer" this flammable query not to automotive and fuel experts (we'd get the same "technical" answers anyway), but to the people we knew consume fuel the most: career race car drivers. All those years behind the wheel getting busy beating the clock and one another has left these drivers "street wiser" in terms of the strange interplay between driving habits and engine response.

Furthermore, these racers—whether they're into circuit, motocross, rallycross, or Formula 3 racing—become your regular drivers on the highways. Like us,

they feel the pinch of rising fuel prices. Their big advantage, of course, is that with their advanced driving skills, saving fuel has become second nature for them. The good news they tell us is that we don't have to be racing superstars to learn how to save fuel.

**Racing legend Pocholo**

Ramirez—still active at the Miata Cup at the age of 71—has been the talk of the town since achieving a near-impossible feat of 49.7 km per liter during a Honda economy run.

If you think he turned off the engine while running to save fuel, think again. He didn't even

tailgate a bus to minimize wind drag, nor did he roll up his window and turn off his air-conditioner. He just did what 40 years in motorsports has taught him—drive impeccably.

"When Dad did it with the Honda econo run it was just a straight drive, and he was very light on the

throttle, very gentle with the braking, and anticipated a lot. He built the momentum and tried to maintain it," said race driver Georges Ramirez, one of Pocho's four sons who's also into racing.

"One of his techniques was keeping the engine speed low at 1,500 rpm or even 1,200 rpm before shifting up. If your transmission ratios are good then at 1,500 rpm the speed of the car is already good," said racer Kookie Ramirez, Pocholo's eldest son.

Can one drive fast and still be economical?

At 80 to 100 kph, keep an eye on the tachometer as well. Pocholo advises to keep the rpm (engine speed) low. Every time the tachometer reaches 2000 rpm, then shift gears. So even if you're going at 80 or 100 kph, keep your rpm at 2000. 80-kph, Kookie says, is the most economical speed, given that the engine speed is also low.

At the end of that fateful Honda econo-run, even Pocholo couldn't believe his eyes. Now, Pocholo says that feat can be repeatable. "If you're going to do any fuel economy driving, you should never go over 80 kph because above that you'll be using up more gas than if you were driving it less," he says.

And it isn't such a good idea to drive slow in order to save fuel as well. "The key is to get to a higher gear because it's the gearing that will give you the economy. If the rpm is low that is what will give you economy," Pocholo stresses.

But how do you force an automatic transmission to change gear when the tachometer reaches 2000? "You 'flick' it (meaning abruptly step a little harder), then release. It will change gear. In manual transmission, just accelerate until you reach 2,000 rpm and then shift."

In other words, Pocholo says, "Drive with your tachometer and



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And better

1.8 VVT-i engine dramatically improves driving performance and fuel efficiency

And better

Gate-type automatic shift lever provides excellent operability

And better

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And better

The Power driver's seat is 6-way adjustable for comfort

And better

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You move ahead of the times by taking the lead in setting new trends. You improve on your assets to keep you on top. Just like the New Corolla Altis 2004 with a high-performance 1.8 VVT-i engine. It's equipped with a computer that matches the timing of valves to your driving situation. The result is greater pull, precise control, cleaner exhaust and better fuel efficiency.

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NEW COROLLA  
2004 ALTIS



# TIPS TO HELP YOU PASS THE EMISSION TEST





## New NLEX toll reasonable; Camry catch

THE MOST common reaction to any increase in prices is anger. That's not surprising because, by nature, man hates seeing his budget disturbed. He will rejoice if it's a reduction of prices. He will raise his voice if it's an increase of prices. By nature, man is selfish, self-centered, self-preserved.

Take the case of the increased toll at North Luzon Expressway (NLEX). When the toll was increased sometime ago, many protested. They were those who normally belong to the flock of the knee-jerk: one angry fellow normally attracts a throng, especially if the anger is of common nature, such as the slashing of the pocket. It's called the mob mentality. One provokes one with the surefire approach: go for the jugular money.

But not everybody is angry. And that includes me. I, for one, take the toll increase on a different plane: it is both logical and legal that tolls be increased in light, simply, of the billions of pesos spent to rehabilitate the nearly 40-year-old NLEX.

Contrary to common notion, the new toll at NLEX is not another unreasonable price increase. What is being collected now is the accurate toll computation, which has again, simply, been enforced in order to operate and maintain the new NLEX in tip-top shape all year round. I now regularly traverse this highway and I really find it a very enjoyable right altogether

### FULL TANK



Al Mendoza

each time, even as it has yet to be totally completed. My only complaint at the moment is the noncompletion of the NLEX rehabilitation in its targeted date. Correct me on this, please?

But the toll, I repeat, is not another price increase; it is a new toll computation for a new tollway system. Let us forget, the new NLEX is an entirely new investment, with new design and new features offering a new level of service under a new management and new operator.

Bottom line is, newness explicitly implies quality. As I keep saying, quality has got to be a little expensive, if not downright expensive, as in a luxury car.

The new Camry, unveiled in July, has been making heads turn wherever it goes. I'm not surprised one bit. Considered as America's best-selling sedan in its class for so long, the new Camry has been equipped with a much higher level of performance with the introduction of a new 3-liter V6 VVT-i engine. Not only is Toyota's flagship model superpowerful and impeccably elegant, it also gives you the best combination

of new exterior and interior designs that elevates the new model into a truly luxurious premium sedan.

The Camry has been the consistent leader in its class since it barged into the country in 2002. It has remained as the best-selling model in the midsize luxury sedan segment so far this year with a 52 percent share of the market.

"In Toyota, we strive to be the best that we can be. We continue to raise our standards, to compete not only with others, but also with ourselves," said Toyota Motor Philippines president Nobuharu Tabata during Camry's launch. "With the reintroduction of the 2004 Camry, we are making the best among the best."

The Camry's new 3-liter V6 VVT-i engine provides ample torque, quick acceleration, outstanding fuel efficiency and exhilarating performance. The advanced technology of the 1MZ-FE engine enables the driver to effortlessly accelerate in a harmony of power and responsiveness by generating a maximum power of 212 horsepower at 5,800 rpm, an increase of 55 horsepower from



CAMRY

the previous model. The new Camry also features a new 5-speed automatic transmission Super ECT that delivers versatile and optimized response for better fuel economy.

One new feature of the 2004 Camry is the HID (High Intensity Discharge) headlamps that radiate a sharp and aggressive aura with its clearer looking lens and inner accents that form the three ovals. The new HID technology has been adopted for longer lasting bulbs and a brighter illumination.

The front seats are equipped with power reclining, sliding and cushion vertical adjust while the rear seats are powered with the same reclining and vertical adjust feature with the controls easily located at the center armrest.

The 2004 Camry is equipped with new active safety features that help avoid accidents. Its clearance and back sonar sensor provide great help when parking as it displays and alerts the driver for obstacles, while the new HID lamps emit greater

illumination for increased visibility during night driving.

Finally, one touch of a button releases an automatic sunshade providing instant comfort and luxury for the rear passenger.

The 2.4 Camry is already an excellent buy. With the 3-liter Camry, costing only P1,680,000, the catch is, who needs a Rolls Royce?

QUOTE ME: I agree. Let's arrest motorists using the cell phone while driving.

## Ssangyong unveils Rodius-Stavic MPV

SSANGYONG Motors not only offers SUVs, recreational and passenger cars that break the barriers in design, power, features and price, it also continues to make a big impact in the global car market, including the Philippines.

Now, get ready to be awed by its latest innovation of the leading Korean carmaker, the Rodius-Stavic MPV.

### Outstanding features

Just out of the plant last May, the Rodius-Stavic is outlined by outstanding features that are sure to give other multipurpose vehicles (MPVs) stiff competition.

The Rodius-Stavic is run by a 2.7-liter diesel engine, one of the biggest and most economical engine displacements among existing MPVs in the market today. Of German technology, the CRDi engine is similar to the engine of the Mercedes-Benz ML 270. The engine is noted for being powerful, economical and environment-friendly.

Except when compared with a full-fledged van, the Rodius-Stavic is most spacious with a seating capacity of 9 to 11 persons. Measuring 5,125 mm in length and 1,915 mm in width and packaged in a sleek aerodynamic design, the Rodius makes a commanding presence on the road. What's more, it is mean with a T-Tronic 5-speed automatic capability, and a power plant that delivers a maximum power of 165 ps/4,000 rpm and maximum torque of 34.7 kg.m/1,800-3,200 rpm.

The Rodius-Stavic rides on 225/65R16

tires. It has a rear-wheel drive system, which spells more economy and lesser engine wear and tear. Safety is guaranteed with its front airbag, 4-channel ABS, and front and rear ventilated disk brakes.

### Value for money

All this notwithstanding, the Rodius comes at an affordable price, a value-for-money feature that will definitely delight intelligent car buyers.

Says Salvador "Dingdong" Lopez, sales manager of Wheels Automall, the exclusive distributor of Ssangyong vehicles in the Philippines: "We give value for your money because the options and features that are available in other car brands are also available in Ssangyong. However, with us you spend several hundreds of thousands of pesos less. The Rodius-Stavic is cheaper, packed with more features, more esthetically appealing and can seat more."

The Rodius-Stavic, according to him, is very popular in Korea and it is in fact in big demand there. In the Philippines, the initial inventory that Wheels Automall brought in sold like hotcakes.

This indeed is a testament to the growing acceptance of Korean vehicles in the country owing to their leverages over the more established brands in terms of price, design and features.

The Rodius-Stavic is offered only at Wheels Automall located at 222 B. Rodriguez St. Ave., Quezon City.

## Super motorbikes featured at sport truck, custom car show

THIS year's Caltex Delo Sport Truck & Custom Car Show will now include super motorbikes and bicycles as part of its regular event highlights.

The Bike Show will have its own series of displays, bike show competition, seminars and other unique features. It is set from Sept. 29 to Oct. 3 at the Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall B. Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City.

To be showcased are bicycles for special use such as mountain bikes, touring bikes, velodrome bikes and triathlon bikes from Trek, Cannondale, Shimano, Colnago, Seven and Corima. The Manila Sport Car Club will display a special bicycle donated by BMW, which was used by the security marshals during the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. The bike can be folded for easy storage and has many features that are innovative even today.

### Clubs

Several motorcycle and bicycle clubs are represented in the show. Among them are the BMW Owners Society of Saferiders, Ducati Desmo Club, Greenhills Cycling Club, HD

Riders, National Motorcycle Sports & Safety Association, Philippine Scooter Federation, Vintage Motorcycle Society Philippines and the Manila Sports Car Club.

Most of these clubs are also joining the open class competition for motorcycles. Notable entries to the competition are 2004 Ducati 999R, 2001 Ducati Monster 900, 2004 Ducati 749, 2004 Harley Davidson Classic Softail, 2002 Harley Davidson Fatboy, 2002 Suzuki GSX 1300R Hayabusa, 1977 Colin Lane Racer Bike, 1979 Bob Jackson Tandem Bike, 1942 BSA Clubman 600, 1964 Triumph Trophy, 1960 Norton Commando and a 1960 BMW 600.

### Mecca

Organized by TradeShow International Inc., the Caltex Delo Sport Truck & Custom Car Show has become the mecca for sport truck, custom car and automotive racing enthusiasts bringing together under one roof, the most widely modified sport trucks, SUVs, pickups and cars in the country.

This year, more than 500 pre-

pared sport trucks, SUVs and custom cars will be on hand to compete for class honors and ultimately, for the much coveted "Best of Show" award.

Ramon To-Ong, last year's sport truck "Best of Show" winner will put on display his tough 4x4 off-road racers—1985 Toyota Hilux Pickup, 1958 Chevy pickup and a 1992 Toyota Surf. Brian Diaz of Ride Inc. and last year's 1st runner-up "Best of Show" winner will also exhibit his mighty 4x4 off-road racers—a Jeep CJ-7 and a Toyota Landcruiser. Veteran racer Mike Potenciano will loan his Formula 2000 open wheel race car for display.

The show is presented by Caltex Delo with Ambi Pur as gold sponsors and Top Gear magazine as major sponsor. Minor sponsors are EKO Armoring, Sunrise Holidays Concepts, 105.1 Crossover, Magic 89.9, 99.5 RT, Wave 89.9, 103.5 K-Lite, Jam 88.3, Infodine, www.yehey.com, Motorcycle Philippines, Inquirer, Manila Bulletin, Business World, Today, Buy & Sell, Vantage Consulting & Solutions Inc., Sky Star, Samsung, Taytan Int'l Corp. and Citibank.

## Filipino racers are also fuel misers

From page C1

you will, save a lot of fuel."

There's just one setback to this technique. Overtaking another vehicle might take a lot of work, or not feasible at all since the rpm ranges (1,500 to 2,200) do not give the driver enough power to pass.

### 'Suave Marave'

Asian Formula 3 champion Pepon Marave just left yesterday for Indonesia to compete in a Formula 3 race. But before leaving, he issued this fearless challenge to taxi and jeepney drivers: let the three of them drive the same car, with the same amount of fuel and end in the same destination. He guarantees that he'll end up with 20 percent more fuel.

Not that he's showboating. Marave even spills the beans on how he'll do it:

Momentum conservation. Pepon says you build up speed (up to 100 kph) "and try to maintain it. Conserve momentum." But isn't high speed guaranteed gas guzzling? Not so, replies Pepon. "A gas guzzler is when you're doing a hundred and you don't know how to anticipate what's in front of you, and you keep on braking, then decelerate again and then build up speed again. It's the erratic speed condition that is fuel consuming."

Thus, smooth driving is also another technique to save on gas. Step on it ever so gently. "Malakas sa gas yung bomba ka ng bomba, apak bitaw apak bitaw (You consume more fuel when you keep

on stepping hard on the accelerator)." Anticipate four or five cars away, and you won't have to apply the brakes that often.

Anticipate even before turning the ignition. Pepon advises that you plan your trip and choose the route that would be conducive for smooth driving.

### Smooth shifting

Smooth driving doesn't only entail the gas pedal, but also the power transmission as well. For gasoline engines, Pepon says that at 2,500 rpm he would already be shifting. For diesel engines it could even be lower, at 1,500 to 2,000 rpm.

The type of engine used is also a big consideration. For city driving, Pepon would prefer driving on a diesel engine. For pure performance, gas is better. "But talking everything into consideration, let's more practical now to get a diesel."

Throw that clutch driving habit out of the window, Pepon stresses. "It will not only destroy the clutch, it will also consume a lot of fuel."

The best fuel saving technique is when you share the car, and the fuel expenses in a car pool. Pepon considers himself an advocate of the car pool. "I wish there were car pool lanes on Edsa, a special lane for cars with three or more passengers."

Does he advise owners of large engines to junk the big one and get the 1.3- or 1.5-liter instead? No need to, he replies. Though a large engine would always con-



FUEL miser "Suave" Marave

sume more fuel, "if you drive it right, you can still maximize its fuel efficiency."

Driving big engines right means avoiding idle time as much as possible. For Tuason Racing School teacher JP Tuason, big engine cars (2 liters up) consume more fuel because of the traffic situation in Metro Manila. Says JP: "We're always stuck in traffic, the car is always idle, it just consumes a lot of fuel when it stays idle. Smaller engines consume less gas when they're running on idle."

He stresses that drivers should keep an eye on the tachometer. "Keep within the correct power band. Make sure you're not over-revving or under-revving the engine." Revving higher than 3,000 rpm makes the engine consume more fuel than it needs. But revving below 1,500 rpm is also

difficult for the engine, as it does not burn the fuel properly.

A well-maintained car is also necessary. If your car is not tuned up properly there's a lot of gas wastage as the unburned fuel merely comes out of the tailpipe.

### Other checklists

His other to-do checklist that would also help save gas:

- Eliminate jackrabbit starts. Accelerate slowly when starting from a dead stop. Don't push the gas pedal more than 1/4 of the total foot travel. This allows the carburetor to function at peak efficiency.

- Make sure tires are inflated properly.

- JP also makes sure he uses only high-quality oil. "The lower the oil grade, the dirtier the engine runs. And if it doesn't run very clean, it affects the engine's per-

formance. This consumes more gas. The higher quality oil lasts longer and helps burn fuel more efficiently."

### More tips

And since rising fuel prices is a global issue, we decided to surf the Net for "good Samaritans" who were willing to share their own secrets to saving fuel. We found practical tips from howtoadvice.com. Maybe the guys at the tracks can find these tips useful, too.

- Buy gasoline during the coolest time of the day. Early morning or late evening is best. During these times gasoline is densest. Keep in mind that gas pumps measure volumes of gasoline, not densities of fuel concentration. "You are charged according to volume of measurement."

- Avoid filling gas tank to the top. Overfilling results in sloshing over and out of tank. Never fill the gas tank past the first "click" of the fuel nozzle (if the nozzle is automatic).

- Keep windows closed when traveling at highway speeds. Open windows cause air drag, reducing your mileage by 10 percent.

- Avoid tailgating—the driver in front of you is unpredictable. Not only is tailgating unsafe, but it affects your economy if he slows down unexpectedly.

- Think ahead when approaching hills. If you accelerate, do it before you reach the hill, not while you're on it. Avoid rough roads whenever possible, because dirt or gravel rob you of up to 30

percent of your gas mileage.

- Use alternate roads when they are safer, shorter and straighter. Compare traveling distance differences—remember that corners, curves and lane jumping require extra gas. The shortest distance between two points is always straight.

- Automatic transmissions should be allowed to cool down when your car is idling at a standstill, railroad crossings, long traffic lights, etc. Place gear into neutral position. This reduces transmission strain and allows transmission to cool.

- Park car so that you can later begin to travel in forward gear. Avoid reverse gear maneuvers to save gas.

So, what's the answer to the query? It seems you don't have to buy anything more than what you already have since you were born. Unlearning some bad habits to make room for the good ones, aided by the wisdom coming from your coconuts, and you could soon easily pooh-pooh the next round of oil price increases, well, at least a little bit more than the other bad driver.

- Check your owner's manual for recommended maintenance intervals.

- Make sure to maintain clean air filters as diminished airflow increases gas wastage.

- Have suspension and chassis parts inspected for occasional misalignments. Bent wheels, axles, bad shocks, or broken springs would create engine drag and are also unsafe



## MOTORING



# The risks of buying a converted car

THOSE of us who cannot afford to buy a brand-new car have two options: 1) buy a slightly used car that is one or two years old, or has less than 20,000 km mileage; or 2) buy an imported, originally right-hand drive (RHD) used motor vehicle that has been converted to left-hand drive (LHD) and auctioned in Subic.

## ON THE ROAD



Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

The lure of buying a used import from Subic is almost irresistible. Imagine, you can own a made-in-Japan SUV or minivan for one-third the price of the same locally assembled model! If you are a used car buyer, it is easy to believe the importers' claim that they are not violating any law by converting RHD vehicles to LHD as long as they pay the proper taxes and duties, and as long as the conversion is done within the Subic economic zone in a shop accredited by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA). What's more, the importers reassure you that the converted vehicles are safe because they are not sold until they have passed roadworthiness, safety and emission tests conducted by the Land Transportation Office's Motor Vehicles Inspection Section.

## Questions

It is at this point, however, that the buyer should start asking questions. How efficiently does the government regulate the crucial conversion process? What are the SBMA's criteria for an auto shop's accreditation to convert RHDs to LHDs? How qualified is the SBMA to evaluate a shop's capability to perform conversion jobs properly? Do the LTO inspectors have the technical expertise and

how do they check a converted vehicle's roadworthiness and compliance with safety and emission standards? By subjecting the car to a rigorous road test or by merely running the engine for some minutes?

Be aware that converting RHD cars is a high-volume, low-cost business in Subic and that a lot of transferring of electrical parts and welding is done to accommodate the repositioning of the steering wheel and pedals. This increases the risk of an electrical fire while the engine is running or the car itself collapsing if the welding of electrical wiring or key structural points was not done properly. Converted cars from Subic have been reported suddenly developing engine fire, collapsing on the road or the steering running out of control and direction. Of course, the used car importers will never admit these things and the SBMA does not seem to care.

## Trash

In defending their trade, the Subic importers conveniently overlook the environmental impact of imported used cars aside from the smoke-belching factor. As pointed out by Trade Undersecretary Elmer Hernandez recently, the used cars that are imported here from Japan are already considered trash since they are 5 to 7 years old and have reached the end of their life span. Since they are considered trash in Japan, their manufacturers have phased out the production of their replacement parts. Ergo, buyers of these old vehicles will have increasing difficulty

finding spare parts, even in junkyards, and this reduces the period of time the vehicle can be driven safely or reliably.

Inevitably, Hernandez said, after a few years converted cars end up in junkyards, rotting there and creating a massive environmental problem. Junked motor vehicles are not marketable as scrap metal, Hernandez explained, since they have a huge paint content. The paint has to be treated first before the metal can be melted, otherwise it will damage the melting process. Hernandez has basis to conclude that the Philippines is becoming a dumping ground of foreign rubbish that adds to our own automobile trash. Small wonder, since we are the only Southeast Asian nation accepting old cars junked by their country of origin.

## New tax

The Arroyo administration, grappling with a fiscal crisis created in part by inefficient tax collection, is finally showing the political will to discourage the purchase of imported used cars that is slowly killing the Philippine automobile manufacturing industry. Via an executive order, a P500,000 specific tax will be slapped on imported used cars to cover the environmental hazards that they bring in. Together with the existing 30 percent duty on completely built-up (CBU) vehicles imported from non-Asian countries, the new tax should hike the prices of these vehicles to a million pesos each or more.

However, the government must prepare for a Temporary Restraining Order

that the importers and Subic lobby will most likely try to obtain. After all, a TRD is how they succeeded in stopping the Department of Trade and Industry from enforcing the Motor Vehicle Development Program's provision banning the importation of used cars. Meanwhile, if you are shopping for a used car, consider this: What's so smart about buying a converted SUV or minivan from Subic at one-third its local price if you endanger your family's and your own safety every time you drive it?

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER. A closed mouth gathers no feet.

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph

## Kia bestseller SUV wins 4x4 Magazine's car of the year award

KIA's bestseller sport utility vehicle, Sorento, has recently won the prestigious 4x4 Magazine's Car of the Year 2004 Award.

The much-covered title was achieved ahead of other high-profile and more established brands.

## Outstanding qualities

The full test report concludes: "Those who are tempted by the Sorento, proba-

bly including many newcomers to the sport utility vehicle lifestyle, will quickly appreciate the qualities that lift it to the top of our 4x4 of the Year league table—spaciousness, comfort, driving enjoyment and sheer value for money."

Applauded for a serene coastal town in Italy, the Sorento boasts of stylish look, abundant space, sturdy body-on-frame design and strong engine performance

The Sorento's engine satisfies the motorist with its 3.5-liter common rail diesel whose quietness and smoothness elevates diesel performance to new heights by serving up 140 cpsi of thrust at 3,800 rpm and a generous 32.0 kg m at 2,000 rpm of maximum torque. This results in a 20 percent improvement in fuel efficiency and 50 percent reduction in exhaust fumes.

Inside, the Sorento's seats and rear

cargo space adapt to your needs so you can take what you want and where you want. With rear seats upright, you have 31.4 cubic feet of cargo space. This doubles to 66.4 cubic feet when the rear seats are folded.

## Safety systems

Equipped with state-of-the-art safety systems, the Sorento's highly rigid welded steel body, mounted to a sturdy ladder

frame, is reinforced fore and aft with crumple zones that help preserve cabin integrity.

Doors are fitted with ultrahigh-tension steel that shields passengers against side collision.

Launched in the Philippines at the latter part of last year, the Sorento has been an immediate success and has contributed to Kia's growing position in the global automotive industry.

## Mild Seven Renault rising star visits Manila on Oct. 2

IN THE RACING world where points are gained and careers lost in mere split seconds, few things are certain. But from the very first time Fernando Alonso sat behind a steering wheel, it was clear that this Spanish hotshot was destined for greatness.

After scoring three podiums in the last five races this season going into the Italian Grand Prix (GP) at Monza, Alonso has lived up to the expectations of his fans and the Mild Seven Renault F1 team.

Along with teammate Jarno Trulli, Alonso has been a major force in Mild Seven Renault's successful run this season as they maintain second place in the Constructors Championship.

With Williams-BMW at a distant fourth, it is virtually certain that Mild Seven Renault will ac-

complish their goal announced at the beginning of the season which is to finish as one of the Top 3 teams in 2004.

Over the past two seasons with Mild Seven Renault, Alonso has impressed the racing world not only with his breathtaking brand of racing but also his ability to improve constantly.

## Indomitable spirit

Says Mild Seven Renault executive director of engineering Pat Symonds: "Fernando is the product of the new generation of racing drivers. His driving style is very aggressive, he brakes later and harder. He has huge talent and an incredible ability to adapt to whatever the car is doing. He knows how to get 100 percent out of a car that isn't perfectly set up. On the exit of slow corners, he gets his foot flat on the floor as soon as possible."

Indeed, an apt description of driver who holds "competitiveness" and "sincerity" as his key values.

It is this sincerity that leads Alonso to confess, "I hate losing." And he makes it a point to back up these words with actions.

During the Malaysian GP last March, Alonso spun out during qualifying and had to start the race on the last row. Undaunted, Alonso leveraged on the superior launch control of the Mild Seven Renault R24 race car, acknowledged as the fastest starter in F1 today, to overtake seven other drivers even before reaching the first turn of the Sepang Circuit.

Without a doubt, Alonso is one driver well-acquainted with adversity. In 2001, Alonso, then an F1 rookie, man-

aged to pilot the underperforming car of the Minardi Team fast enough to finish as one of the top 10 drivers in the sport.

## Coming to Manila

After only four years of F1 racing, Alonso has already compiled a résumé that eclipses the achievements of those who have been driving for more than twice as long. In 2003, the Spaniard tucked in a victory at the Hungarian GP and finished on the podium in Malaysia, Brazil and Spain earning him sixth place in the Drivers Championship.

This year, Alonso has made it a point to outdo himself. With four races to go in the 2004 season, he is currently fourth/fifth among all drivers. The 23-year-old driver has finished on the podium four times—in Australia, France, Germany and Hungary. On Oct. 2, in between the maiden race at the Shanghai International Speedway, Jia Ding district, China and the traditional Japanese GP in Suzuka, Alonso will take off his helmet and don another hat—that of an ambassador for F1 to Filipino fans at Play Underground in Powerplant Mall, Rockwell.

Mild Seven Renault makes Alonso the youngest and, at the same time, the most successful F1 driver to ever visit the Philippines. This visit ends that long yearning of passionate Filipino F1 fans to see and meet a top-caliber racer like Alonso who is a top performer and even promises to improve further down the road.

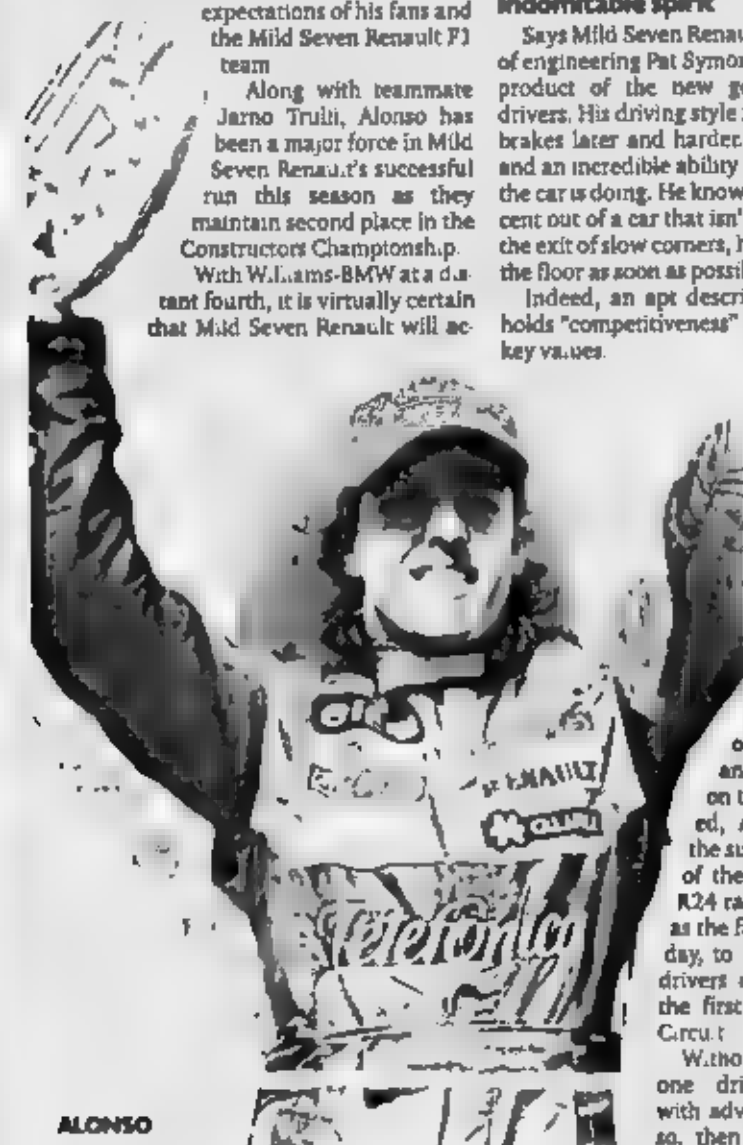
Arriving in Manila together with Alonso are two cars—the real R23 race car and the prototype model of the R24. The prototype is a scale model that was used to develop the R24 race car which is being used by the Mild Seven Renault Team this season.

As the premier educators of F1 in the Philippines, Mild Seven has already mounted a string of successful promos and events carrying F1 racing themes. In 2001, Mild Seven mounted the "Mild Seven SPEEDshow" which introduced local racing aficionados to the R201 team race car. For 2002, the focal point of the "Mild Seven XLR8: The Mild Seven F1 Experience" was Jenson Button and the R202 race car. Last year, Mild Seven Renault test driver Alan McNish came to the Philippines along with the R23B race car.

By bringing in a driver like Alonso with

unquestionable talent complemented by boyish good looks and a fun-loving personality, Mild Seven Renault firmly stamps its ownership and commitment to F1 racing by contributing to the rising popularity and ever-increasing fan base of the sport in the Philippines.

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# Why today's generation of diesel engines are 'green'

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

(Last of two parts)

**L**AST March, the country got a glimpse of how today's high-performance diesel engines perform in fuel economy test.

At the end of the three-hour Fuel Economy Run 2004 sponsored by the Department of Energy, an Isuzu Crosswind XUVi Asian utility vehicle, a BMW X5 3.0d sport utility vehicle and a BMW 530d sedan proved to be among the most fuel-efficient as the three consumed a total of only 8.68 liters, 13.93 liters and 8.16 liters of diesel, respectively.

That translated to an impressive mileage of 19.58 km/L of diesel for the Crosswind, 12.2 km/L for the X5 3.0d, and 21.2 km/L for the 530d.

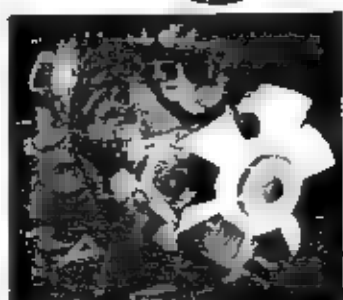
The three were among the 60-vehicle convoy that traveled—with air-conditioning system, headlights and hazard lights—on a total distance of 170 kilometers at an average speed of 60 km/h with a maximum speed set at 80 km/h.

The Crosswind was powered by a 2.5-liter four-cylinder overhead valve direct injection diesel engine while both BMW entries were powered by a revised in-line six-cylinder diesel engine featuring second-generation common rail technology.

So, what does this economy run prove?

## So much has changed

"The results only show that today's generation of diesel engines is no longer your grandfather's diesel engines. So much has changed, modern diesel engines



**DIESEL engines are now powerful and yet produce less pollutants.**

offer high fuel efficiency, low noise and exhaust levels, and improved drivability," said BMW Philippines corporate communications manager Lito German who added that the continuing diesel engine research in Europe helped tremendously.

Resulting advances in diesel design—particularly the injection of fuel directly into the cylinders—have in recent years produced downsized, higher-speed diesels that offer demonstrable exhaust emissions and fuel-economy gains as well as substantial drivability and noise/vibration/harshness improvements.

"Contrary to what many people think, today's generation of high-performance diesels are not dirty or noisy anymore," claimed German.

In fact, it was in Europe where the common rail direct injection was first developed.

The CRDi is the new-generation state-of-the-art diesel technology that is largely being used by premium cars worldwide.

The core of any CRDi system is that it makes a slow-revving and unresponsive diesel perform like

a gasoline engine, without making it lose out on any of its efficiency.

## New innovations

Citing the Association of European Automobile Manufacturers (Acea), the new innovations that helped in the development of CRDi include:

- **Turbocharging**, which utilizes energy from the engine exhaust to boost performance.

- **Common-rail fuel injection**, which is an advanced fuel pump technology that is part of the new fuel control system in clean diesel engines. By directly feeding the injectors from a single fuel pump, an electronic system precisely controls the pressure and timing of fuel injection.

- **Variable Injection Timing**, is another innovation in the new fuel control system in which an electronically controlled high-pressure fuel injector releases the precise amount of fuel at the moment of maximum compression (when the piston reaches the top of the cylinder).

- **Diesel particulate filter** is another technology that removes particulates from the exhaust by incinerating them. The filter substrate is coated with a precious metal alloy, which, together with controlled multiple injections, triggers the combustion at approximately 600°C.



**THE FUTURE** looks bright for diesel-powered vehicles.

## Continued diesel dev't

Outside Europe, Japan is another country that has continued the development of diesel engine.

For more than 65 years, Isuzu of Japan has been pioneering numerous technological innovations in the diesel engine field, marking a cumulative total production of over 16 million diesel engines last year.

Isuzu's position as a major diesel engine producer provides the manufacturing clout to offer direct injection at an affordable level.

"Japan wanted to fight the stigma so they looked and developed advanced technologies to make diesel engines cleaner, quieter and more powerful than ever before," said Isuzu Philippines Corp. vice

president Ken Takashima.

But Takashima clarified that Isuzu's main purpose was to use direct injection as a way to make their engine's cleaner and perform better than competitors.

## Environmental impact

Concern about global warming has brought even greater impetus to eliminate the diesel engine's well-known drawbacks.

The smoke coming out from diesel engines consists of unburnt carbon compounds, nitrogen oxide (NOx), and sulfurous fumes, which are found to be main contributors to air pollution.

Diesel engines emit higher levels of NOx and particulate matter (PM) than gasoline engines.

"This is one reason the market shunned diesel engine. But since the automotive industry shares the world community's concerns regarding the environmental impact, diesel manufacturers, in particular, decided to take appropriate action," said Isuzu Philippines PR manager Timmy Naval.

Diesel engines are currently viewed as having immense potential to help prevent global warming because of their relatively low carbon dioxide emissions—the principal greenhouse gas—compared to gasoline engines.

Executive director Allen Schaeffer of Diesel Technology Forum, a lead

ing information source on clean diesel and energy issues, said that today's diesel vehicles burn on an average 30 percent less fuel.

## Quick way

Diesel could be our country's quick way to improve fuel economy and lower the country's pollution levels.

Diesel-powered vehicles are seen by automakers and even some environmentalists as just as promising for the environment as those hybrids (those which combine conventional gasoline engines with an electric motor).

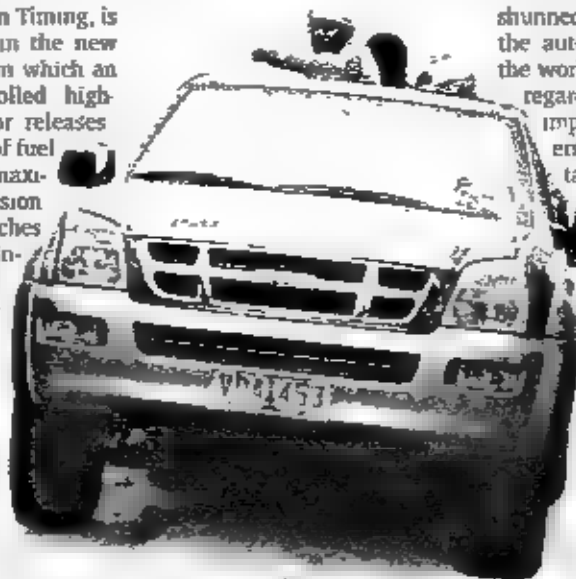
"These missions of boosting fuel economy and cutting greenhouse gases seem to be tailor-made for the diesel," observed Naval.

Much more, the Philippines is now taking a second look at its coconut methyl ester (CME), also known as coco diesel, program in a bid to reduce the country's dependence on imported fuel and create a new market for coconut farmers.

Positive results of various technical tests conducted by the Department of Energy (DOE) recently indicated that the use of coco diesel is most effective in abating atmospheric pollution.

These government tests, which will also ascertain the viability of mandating the use of the fuel for private vehicles, will run until the end of the year.

According to the DOE, coco diesel can be used on diesel vehicles without engine modification and a switch to coco diesel could also help bring down the cost of energy in the country.



**THIS country needs tough going diesels with less impact on the environment**

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# The Malolos banquet revisited

By Ambeth Ocampo

THE CELEBRATIONS held on Sept. 29, 1898 have come down to us in the form of a menu that documents what our founding fathers ate when the Malolos Congress ratified the declaration of independence made from the window of Emilio Aguinaldo's Kawit home on June 12, 1898.

The menu, as reproduced in black and white in Harper's "History of the War in the Philippines" (1900), is also notable as one of the landmark designs by Arcadio Arellano. The cover is in the form of a Philippine flag with the words *Solemn ratification de la independencia* (Solemn ratification of independence).

This flag opens to reveal the date Sept. 29, 1898, and a menu in French. It is proof that ordinary things sound better or more elegant in French.

Even in plain English the menu remains grand. For starters, they had oysters, prawns, buttered radish, olives, Lyon sausages, Sardines in tomato sauce and Holland salmon. The main courses consisted of crab in its shell, vol-au-vent a la Tagale, mutton chops with potato straws, truffled turkey a la Manilloise, filet a la Chateaubriand with green vegetables and cold ham with asparagus. For dessert, there were: cheese, fruits, frozen strawberry preserves and ice

cream.

To wash down all seven appetizers, seven courses and assortment of four desserts, one progressed from Bordeaux to Sauterne, Sherry, Champagne, Chartreuse and Cognac. And finally, then as now, the feast is capped by coffee or tea.

So impressed was Nick Joaquin that he wrote "the menu is a culmination, like Malolos itself, and should stand side by side with the Malolos Constitution."

During the heady days of the 1998 Philippine Centennial, I was tempted to agree with Joaquin, but when the above menu was recreated by Gene Gonzalez of Café Isabel, the foreign chef of the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, and even a restaurant in Davao reviewed by Asanido Doronila, certain questions arose.

## Intriguing

Where did they get the ice cream? Did they even have ice to chill the champagne? How come there is no soup in this grand menu? Did people actually eat everything listed in the menu or was food passed around in *bandejas*?

Perhaps the founding fathers served themselves from a buffet table very much as we would pig out today in an eat-all-you-can promotion. What kind of cheese was served and where did it come from? Was it Philippine mozzarella, better known as *quesong puti*, or was it an imported cheese? Only the salty and hard queso de bola could

The menu serves up a different view of our past

MENU in French for the Malolos banquet held in 1898. PHOTO FROM THE BOOK "FILIPINO HERITAGE"



withstand the long voyage and tropical heat.

Then there are the ingredients not normally found in Malolos: asparagus, olives or truffles? Did these come fresh? I am tempted to say fresh from the can.

What makes the menu intriguing is that we have a description of the food, the fancy names for the dishes, but don't quite know exactly what these were.

## Glorified dishes

Some imagination is required to recreate the feast.

Could the *Coquilles de Crabes* simply be a sly way of referring to crab in its shell? While Gene Gonzalez whipped up a stuffed crab, a *relleno* with gratin or browned topping in 1998, I couldn't help wondering if this was just plain *relleno* *almango*, the same recycled dish we serve for breakfast with flaked leftover crab from a party.

Could the *Abatis de Poulet a la Tagale* be what the late Doreen Fernandez and I believe was probably an elaborate, glorified *adobong manok*? That it was fashioned a la Tagale probably means it had *aray* (liver) and *balunbalun* (gizzard). These choice bits remind us of the opening of Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere," where *tinolang manok* is served and Ibarra draws a leg and giblets from the tureen, leaving a miserable chicken wing and neck for the irritable Padre Damaso.

The Malolos menu is not just a record of what the founding fathers ate in 1898, it is a different kind of historical document that brings out a different view of our past. Food is so ordinary it is often overlooked by historians, but the Malolos banquet proves that history can be found in places other than dusty books and crumbling archival documents.

Comments are welcome at [docampo@ateneo.edu](mailto:docampo@ateneo.edu)

## Making LPG use safer

From page D4

ed by the Archdiocese of Manila together with the Jesuit Communication Center. This allows the Catholic community a new medium of Prayer, Reflection, and Interaction. This is a one-time, one-step registration process. These are subscription-based services wherein the subscriber needs to initiate its activation to trigger receipt of messages. Subscriber will just have to type AMEN and send it to 2371. This

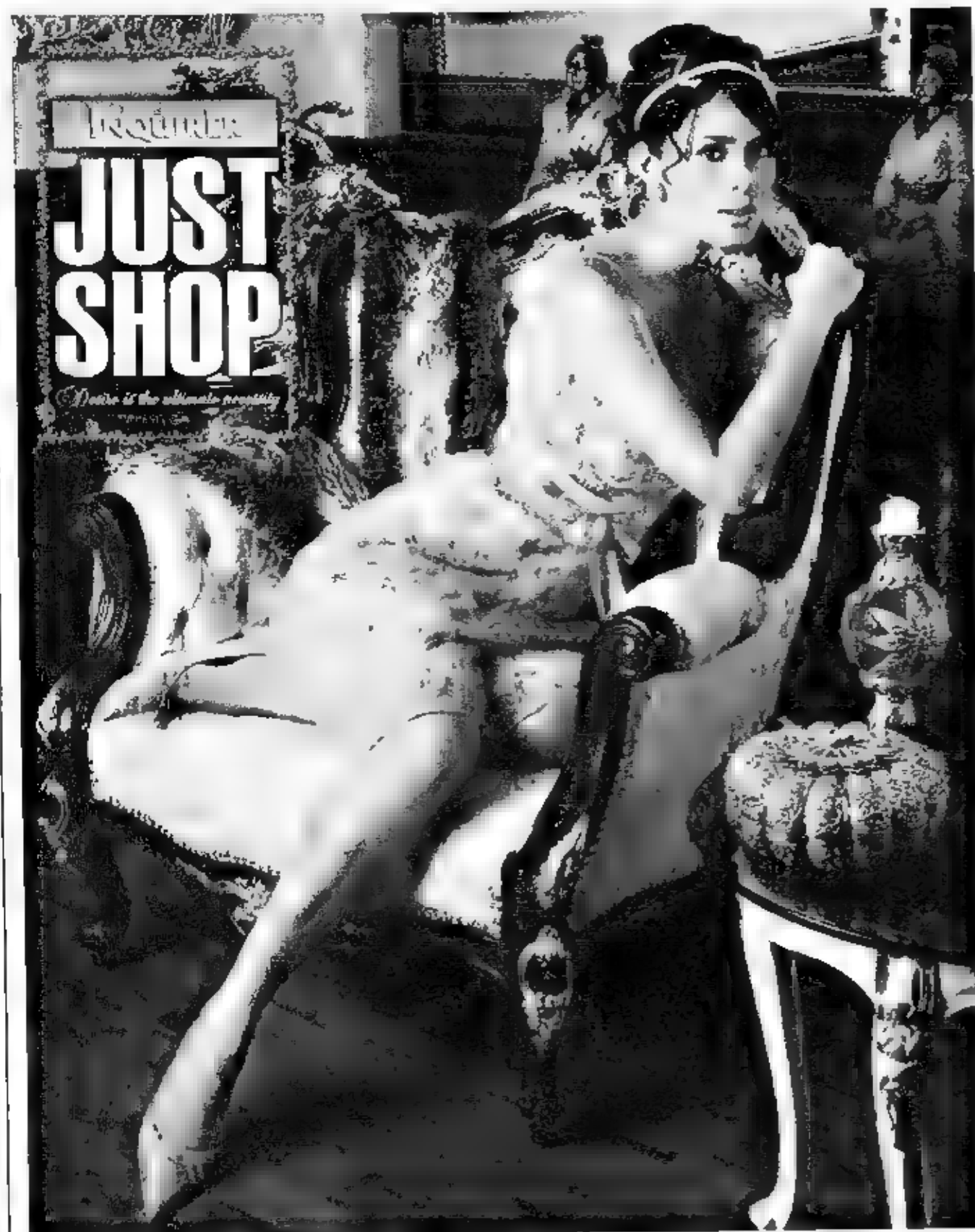
is also charged P2.50 per message. Letter-writer Linda b@wave.com.ph, after reading Globe's reply to her query couched through us, asks why she did not get this explanation

before. In fact on Aug. 19, she got this message in her mobile:

"You too can send text-msgs for FREE. Visit [www.chikka.com](http://www.chikka.com). Your ID is 639178314639 and your password is 02803."

Other mobile phone users say the service is free if you are the one sending the messages but the recipient pays when—or if—he/she responds. Moreover, the fee that the recipient is charged for responding to the message is higher (P2.50) compared to regular messages which usually cost P1 each.

"Lindab" says she is glad to be enlightened on this so she can avoid "inflicting" on her unsuspecting friends the "free service" she is supposed to enjoy.



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**TO make pasta dough:** combine pureed squash with flour in a bowl. Add two eggs, olive oil, pepper and salt. Mix well.



**IN a lightly floured flat surface,** fold, knead and twist the dough until you get a supple, slightly elastic ball. Don't overwork. Rest for 10 minutes. Then slim dough in half.



**TO make thin pasta sheet,** pass the dough through the rollers of a pasta-making machine. Roll dough several times until it is very smooth. Meanwhile, make white bean mixture by mashing and adding roasted garlic.



**THEN,** place sheet of the dough on a tortellini molding cup. Add mashed beans in the center.



**ADD organic egg.**



**COVER** the filled pasta with the remaining dough.



**USING** a ring mold, press the edges of tortellini firmly. Remove excess dough and use to make another tortellini.

## A sunny kalabasa pasta

Text by Vangie Bago-Poyes  
Photos by Roger Corpis

**T**HOUGH it may be easier to buy ready-made pasta, you can get immense satisfaction from making it at home, from the hushed rhythms of kneading the dough and rolling it out, and from the intense concentration involved in cutting the pasta.

If you make your own pasta, you can have the precise shape you want and flavors that are not available in stores.

That's how chef Margarita Poyes concocted *Il Sole*, a kalabasa tortellini with white bean, roasted garlic and poached egg filling. The squash-flavored pasta is made from scratch so you're guaranteed that it's fresh and delicious.

Tortellini, as everybody knows, is a hat-shaped stuffed pasta, similar to ravioli. This simple recipe calls for eggs, all-purpose flour with a pinch of salt and pureed squash. According to Poyes, just peel and dice the squash, discard seeds and strings, and boil the pieces in lightly salted water for about half an hour.

Drain the pieces well and blend them. Should the paste be too liquid, reheat the pasta, stirring briskly, until it has thickened.

*Il Sole* can be quite tedious to make because, apart from making the pasta from scratch, you still have to stuff it. But what makes it interesting is the rich filling that's made of mashed white beans and one whole organic egg from Abra poached to perfection.

The dish is then covered in creamy sage butter sauce with a hint of truffle oil. It's finally garnished with carabao butter from Nueva Ecija and Manchego cheese shavings.

*Il Sole* at Pepato (tel. no. 7572636) is just one of the featured dishes at Saviour Nature Food Festival, ongoing until Sept. 30 at Greenbelt 2 and 3. The fundraising festival is a project of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) International, the global conservation organization.

This year, the event is co-presented with Ayala Land Inc., the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Globe Platinum and Metro Magazine. Some

30 Greenbelt 2 and 3 food and drink establishments have created unique dishes as a salute to nature's bounty.

Diners who want to try the Saviour Nature dishes can still get the Panda Card at only P100 from the WWF booth in Greenbelt 3 and selected restaurants. Every order of a festival dish earns the cardholder one signature. Three signatures entitle one to join the Oct. 4 raffle and win prizes like trips to Puerto Princess and Dumaguete City.

The Panda Card also gives the holder a 50-percent discount on WWF's membership fee. Membership in the conservation organization means invitations to WWF trips and activities.

A Launch Card, now priced at P1,000, also entitles the holder to one free sampling of a festival dish upon ordering a main dish at the participating restos and bars.

Food Magazine is giving the Food Magazine Editor's Pick Award to the most inventive festival main dish. Metro Magazine will present Metro's Pick Award for the best non-main dish. Recipients of the awards will each receive an artwork from sculptor and architect Lor Cauna. Call 9207931 or 9207923.

### Ingredients

For pasta dough  
2 large eggs  
300 g all-purpose flour  
200 g pureed fresh squash  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp pepper

### Filling

120 g white beans, boiled and mashed  
25 g roasted garlic puree  
6 pcs organic egg  
Manchego cheese shavings  
Carabao butter  
Truffle oil, drizzle

For suggestions, e-mail [vbago@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:vbago@inquirer.com.ph)



**POACH** tortellini in salted, boiling water for 3-5 minutes, stirring very gently and occasionally to make sure they do not stick to each other. Set aside.



**TO make sage-butter sauce,** place 2 tbsp butter in a pan. Add sage and salt and pepper to taste. Add tortellini and let the butter coat the pasta.



**TRANSFER** to a serving platter. Garnish with Manchego shavings and fried sage. Put carabao butter in the center and drizzle with truffle oil. Season with freshly ground pepper and serve immediately.



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## Salud to good health and great taste

Text by Alex Y. Vergara  
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

ONE OF Baguio City's best restaurants is moving closer to Manila. Paul and Nina Poblador, the husband-and-wife team behind the successful Salud Bistro up north, will open a second outlet in San Pablo, Laguna, next month.

The new venture will be called Kusina Salud. In lieu of French cuisine, Paul and his team, led by head chef Bho Sorreza, will be serving honest-to-goodness Filipino food using mostly organic ingredients.

Located several meters from the main highway, the restaurant in Barangay Sta. Cruz Putol is surrounded by organic farms—from vegetable farmers to hog and chicken raisers. It also has easy access to fresh seafood from nearby provinces such as Batangas and Quezon.

"These farmers grow vegetables and livestock the way it was done a century ago—sans chemicals and additives," says Paul. "The food takes twice as long to grow,

but they're also twice as tasty and nutritious."

As chef de cuisine, Paul will be in charge of budgeting and fine-tuning the menu. Since he'll be shuttling between Baguio and San Pablo (he's also a consultant for Oh my Gulay and Ang Lounge), he has given Sorreza a free hand to manage Kusina Salud's day-to-day affairs.

"This time," says Paul of Sorreza, who earned his chops working for such restaurants as Chicken Bicolod, Madrigal Grille, Crab and Grille and Gracia's Café, "Bho is going to lead the way in terms of Filipino food. He has the experience, the tongue and the talent for it."

And unlike its predecessor, Kusina Salud has done away with a menu, as it plans to serve lunch and dinner buffet-style to groups of 20 or more people. Dishes will be a revolving concern, as they will depend on the availability of ingredients, but Sorreza will cook them the "Asian way."

"The food will be continuously changing, which is another Salud trademark," says an amused Paul. "We've done away with laminating a permanent menu. What for? Everything will be simply written down on paper."

A typical buffet consists of a seven-course meal that's "home-cooked and rustic." In other

This destination restaurant in Laguna offers Pinoy cuisine, using the best organic ingredients

er words, says Paul, "simple yet polished" Filipino dishes without that rich, buttery aftertaste associated with hotel food.

At a recent private lunch for friends and members of the media, Paul and his staff served *sinigang na lapu-lapu* and organic *mustasa sa miso*, chicken *inasal*, *humba* and *ginataad sitaw* at *kalabasa* with freshwater shrimps.

Due to his stint at Chicken Bicolod, the *inasal* or *inilaw* Ilonggo-style is decidedly one of Sorreza's signature dishes. Before it was fire-grilled, the chicken was marinated in a mixture of vinegar, calamansi juice, ginger and garlic, which explains its unique taste.

The *humba*, which consisted of pieces of organic pork, was cooked in sugar and soy sauce and garnished with black beans, wood ear mushrooms and spring onions. The pork had a melt-in-your-mouth goodness, as it was cooked in slow fire.

"That's one quality of organic pork which sets it apart from ordinary pork," says Paul, who cites the restaurant's pork and seafood dishes as its specialties. "We actually tried to pressurecook it once, but everything—from the meat to the bone—literally fell to pieces."

As much as they'd like vegetables to be the featured dishes, says Paul, they have decided to cater to the Pinoy penchant for eating meat. Aside from *humba*, trust such meaty staples as *patatim*, *pochero* and *kare-kare* to make an appearance in the future.

"Just like in Baguio," he adds, "people are probably bound to ask us what our specialty is. We try our best to make each dish special."

As the restaurant needs a minimum number of people to enable it to charge P400 per head, interested parties need to make reservations in advance. Diners, however, need not be a single group.

Going Asian, by the way, is simply in keeping with the venue's lush garden setting, which can easily accommodate 150-200 people (the Pobladores are open to weddings and private parties). Thanks to a two-story wooden and bamboo structure made mostly from parts of old homes, the place is an attraction in itself.

Friends of Nina's mother, fashion designer SALUDY ET

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# Oktoberfest celebration

**MANDARIN Oriental Manila** stages Oktoberfest on Oct. 1 and 2 at NBC Tent, Fort Bonifacio Global City. The event promises nights of free-flowing beer, buffet of German delicacies and beer-drinking and yodelling contests.

**MANILA Pavilion Hotel's Patiserie** celebrates the Mooncake Festival until Sept. 30. Call 5261212.

**CHINESE Monk** offers mooncakes with white lotus cream and salted egg yolk in the center with black beans and mixed nuts until Sept. 30. Get one box of four mooncakes and have a

## DINING OUT

free appetizer on your next visit. Chinese Monk is at the 1/L, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati. Call 8973785/8969429.

**RASA Express**, a quick-service outlet of Rasa The Best of Singapore at the Coliseum Circle in Arana Center, opens at the Megastrip in SM Megamall, Mandaluyong. The outlet offers Hainanese Chicken, Laksa with Prawn, Singapore Chili Crab and Satay Prima Pork.

**HOLIDAY Inn Galleria Manila's Raphael Café-Restaurant** presents coffee concoctions like Iced Latte, Iced Americano, Iced Cappuccino and Café Mocha. Iced Latte and Frappe come in 10 flavors: Macadamia Nut, Almond Roca, Hazelnut, Amaretto, Irish Cream, Vanilla, Raspberry, Caramel, White and Dark Chocolate. Call 6337111.

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**EDSA Shangri-La's Summer Palace** features Seafood Specials until Sept. 30. These include Deep Fried Fish with sweet and sour sauce, Fried Clams and Rock Lobsters in tauti sauce, Prawn Balls with dried chili, Steamed Mussels with garlic, Seafood with Walnuts, Garoupa Fillet in Sesame Seeds, Cod Fish with Black Mushrooms, and Fish Fillet in XO Sauce. Call 6338888.

ery charge. Super Bowl of China branches are located at Megastrip of SM Megamall; Jupiter Street in Bel-Air, Makati City; Glorietta 4; Chefs Avenue in Festival Mall, Alabang; 2/L SM City North Edsa; Eastwood City Walk 2 in Libis; and at the G/L of SM Fairview.

**FUEGO Hotels** brings "Flavors of Spain 2," a Spanish food festival to be held at Tael Vista Hotel in Tagaytay (Oct. 16-31), Pearl Farm Beach Resort in Davao (Nov. 13-30) and Club Punta Fuego in Balangas (Nov. 19-30). Call 7501999, 7513088/89 or 7501896/98.



**CINNABON** launches Cinnabon Ham and Cheese Croissant. Enjoy them with regular Café Americano for P80 at the following outlets: Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati; Robinsons Place Manila; Shell Travel Plaza-South Luzon; Shell South Luzon-Select; Shell Travel Plaza-North Luzon; Shell North Luzon-Select; SM Megamall; The Podium; San Miguel East Wing of Robinsons Galleria; and Greenhills Shopping Center.

## Salud to good . . .

From page E1



Patis Tesoro, know what we mean. It was Patis and husband Tito who encouraged the two to expand their operations beyond Baguio. Patis even had a separate kitchen and staff house built within the property. Workers are also finishing a parking area somewhere in front.

That would mean, however, opening the family's weekend home to strangers. Like Bistro Salud in Baguio, says Nina, Kusina Salud "evolved from a space in one of my family's homes." Since people have been trooping to the place regularly for quite some time now, it's simply a matter of, well, charging them.

"It will also be a venue for the arts," she adds. "Most of the featured artists, this time, will be my mom's friends."

For starters, Kusina Salud will be featuring the artworks of Carlitos Ortega and former Dutch ambassador Theo Arnold. Nina, the resident events organizers, already has several parties lined up.

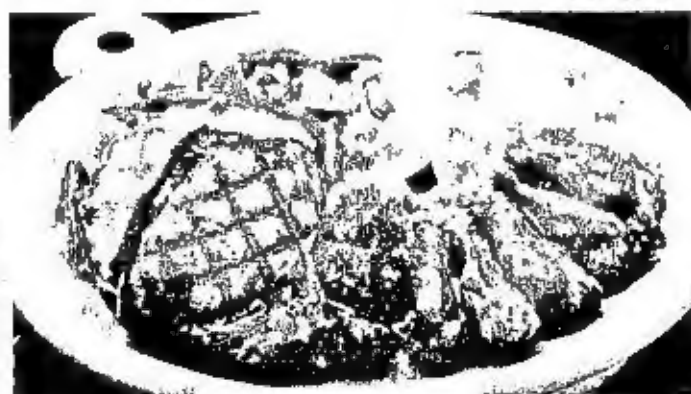
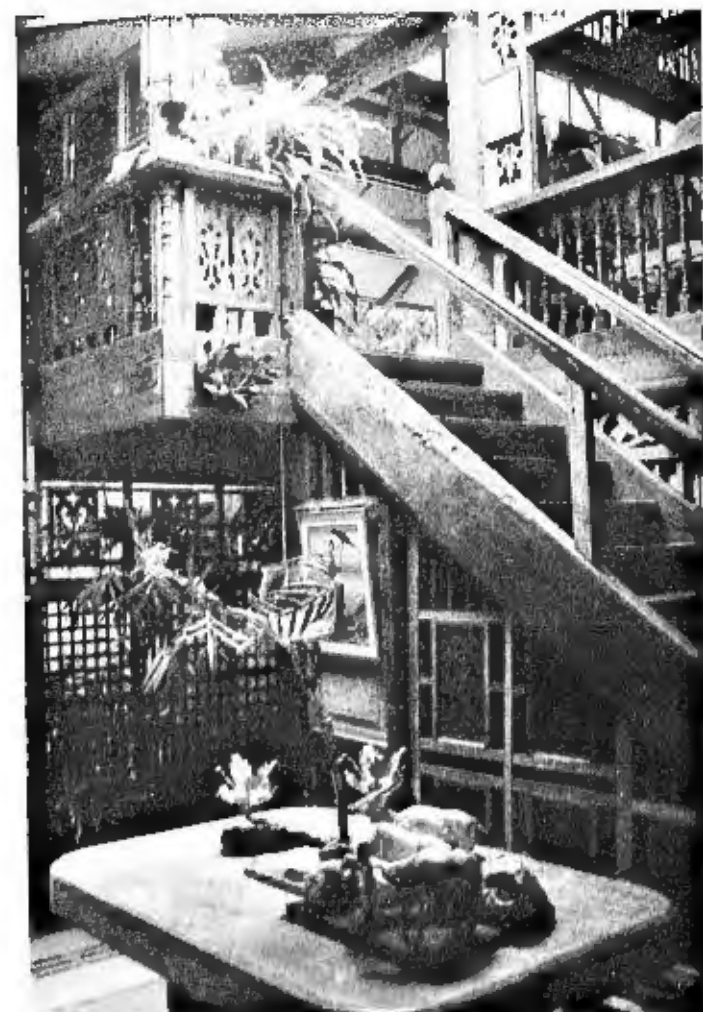
To make the trip more worthwhile, Nina and several restaurant and resort owners plan to hook up and promote the destination to tourists.

For starters, they're coming out with a map pinpointing their establishments and various places of interests. And the best part is, unlike, say, going to Baguio, you don't have to travel for six hours to savor the sights, sounds and flavors Laguna and parts of Quezon.

Call Kusina Salud in: Manila, (02)7265057 and (02)7246203; San Pablo, (049)2466878 and (049)2466877; 0921-7726985. E-mail: kusinasalud@yahoo.com.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

(top photo) HUSBAND-AND-WIFE team Paul and Nina Poblador feels at home; (left) a space for art will feature local artists from Laguna and Quezon.

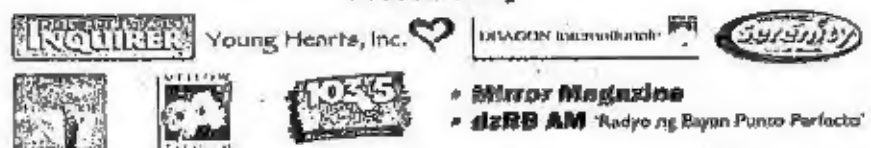


**TGI FRIDAY'S** offers Pacific Grilled Pork Chops as part of Friday's Three for All. TGI Friday's has branches at Robinsons Place, Glorietta 3, Hotel Rembrandt-QC, Sta. Lucia East and Alabang Town Center.

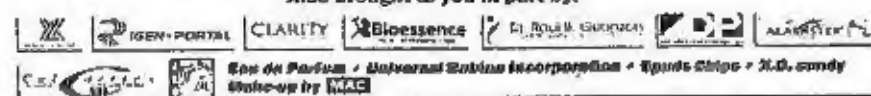
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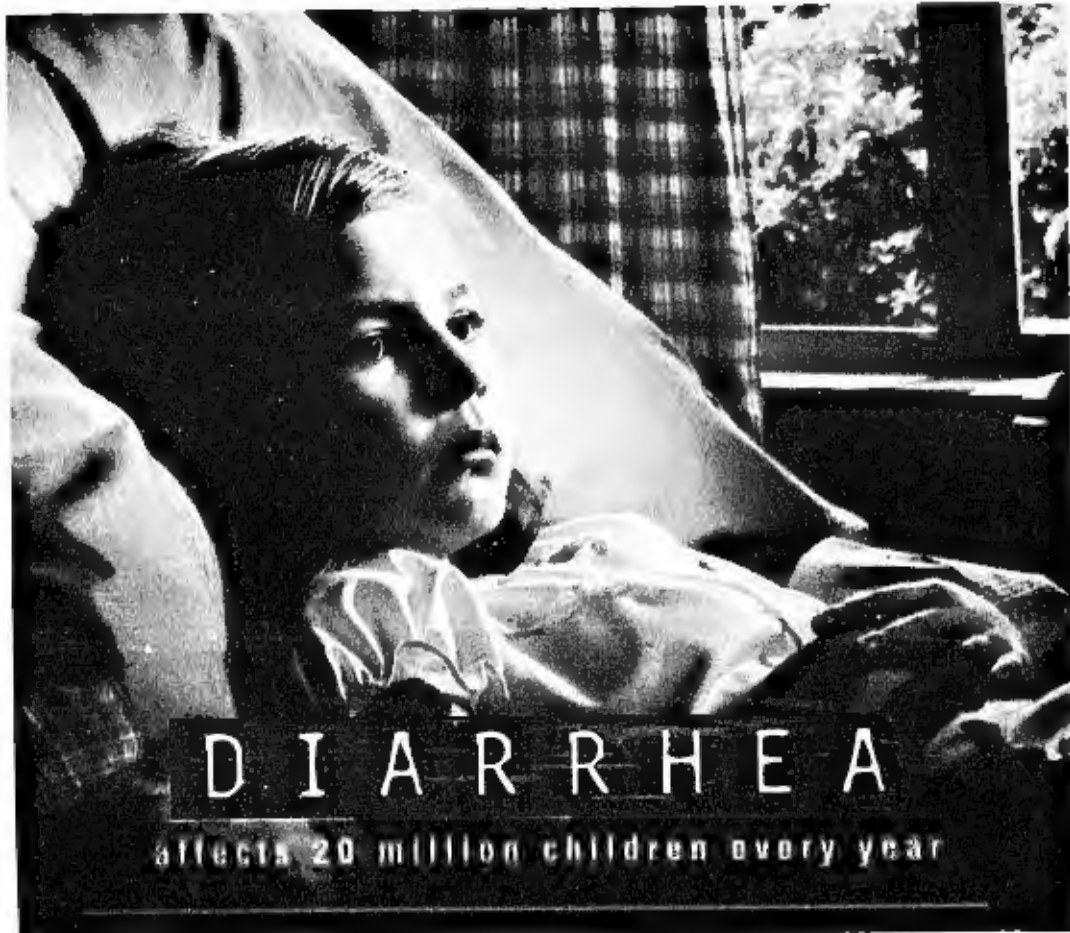
At Sorabol Korean BBQ, diners can seek out new adventures in Korean flavor



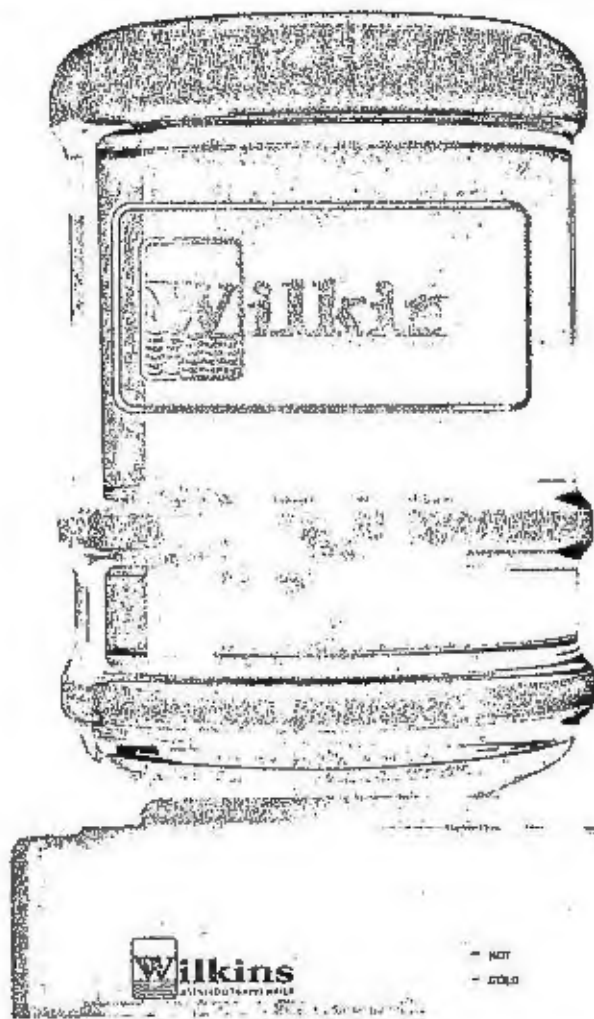
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## Delectable dragon food

Text by Rowena C. Burgos  
Photos by Roger Carpio

WHEN most people think of Korean food, they think of kimchi, Korea's famous side dish which, along with rice, accompanies almost every meal.

But at Sorabol Korean BBQ, diners can seek out new adventures in Korean flavor. "Consumers are becoming more adventurous and demanding when it comes to the food they choose to eat when dining out. So Sorabol is responding to the trend by offering a wide variety of Korean dishes," says Lorraine Lim Aguila, Sorabol franchise owner.

The main feature of Sorabol is Korean barbecue, which includes Kalbi (barbecued short ribs) and Dak Guyee (barbecued chicken). There are also noodles with egg or spinach, appetizers like dumplings, scallion pancakes and rice rolls, salads, rice bowls served with chapchae noodles and rice and vegetarian meals.

The highly nutritious Korean food is low in calories, being made chiefly of a wide variety of vegetables. Seasonings include garlic, red pepper, scallions, soy sauce, fermented bean paste, ginger and sesame oil.

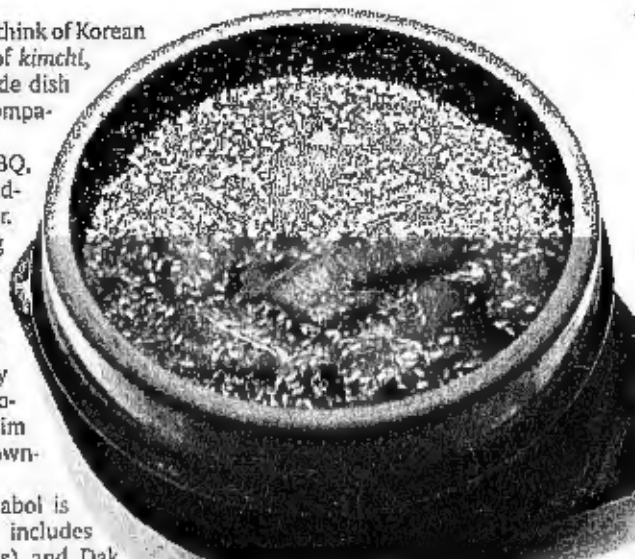
An example is Beef Bulgogi, a Korean-style beef and vegetable dish in traditional garlic sesame barbecue sauce with straw mushrooms, peppers and onions. "Beef Bulgogi represents a treat for the growing number of diners who shun the ordinary," Aguila says.

### Prosperous business

Sorabol, named after the prosperous capital of the Shilla Dynasty, first opened in 1979 at the San Francisco Bay Area. The restaurant's logo is a dragon, which was said to protect that ancient city. The resto's founder, Young-Ran Hong, believes this symbol is lucky for the business.

After winning numerous awards and receiving good reviews from the Bay Area's famously hard-to-please food critics, Sorabol quickly acquired a long list of Korean food enthusiasts.

Sorabol now has 15 outlets in California. In



KALBI Chim (Beef ribs stew)

the Philippines, Sorabol Korean BBQ is located at 2/L, Tastebuds, Robinsons Place, Ermita, Manila (tel. 5210211); Food Choices, Greenbelt 3, Makati (7574006); UG/L, SM Southmall (8004729); and Center Car Park, Greenhills Shopping Center (7271547).

The design of Sorabol in California is similar to a food court, says Aguila, who used to dine with her sister Lora in one of its branches.

"The food is so delicious we decided to bring it home to the Philippines. We're the first to open a franchise in Asia. And the owners are so happy because they have received invitations to open in Singapore and Malaysia. The owner even wants the Singaporean franchisee to train with us," Aguila says.

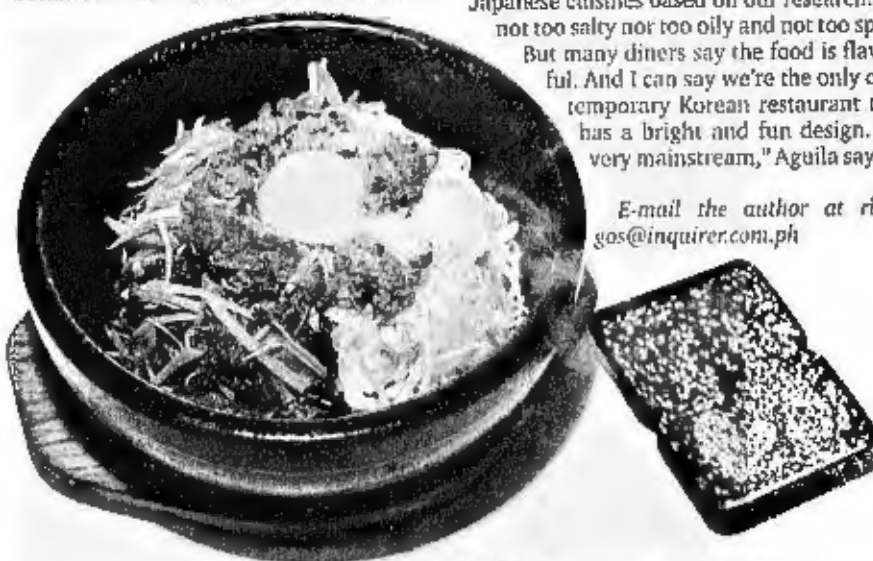
The same menu is served in the franchises, Aguila says, but adapted to the Filipino palate. The spices, oil and noodles used in the restaurants are imported from Korea. "But we don't make the dishes too spicy because Filipinos are not too fond of spicy food," she says.

Sorabol's Filipino cooks were trained by the Korean chef of the San Francisco outlets. He visits the franchisees once a year to check on the quality of food.

"Korean food is akin to Chinese and Japanese cuisines based on our research. It's not too salty nor too oily and not too spicy.

But many diners say the food is flavorful. And I can say we're the only contemporary Korean restaurant that has a bright and fun design. It's very mainstream," Aguila says.

E-mail the author at [rburgos@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:rburgos@inquirer.com.ph)



BIBIM BAP (Vegetable rice topped with fried egg, served with chili sauce)

DOOSOO CHIM (Spicy bean curd sauteed in spicy Korean sauce)

